

# JULIANA ORMESTON:

O R,

## THE FRATERNAL VICTIM.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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By Mrs. HARLEY,

AUTHOR OF

The Countess of Henebon; Castle of Mowbray; St. Bernard's Priory, &c.

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VOL. II.

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# JULIANA ORMESTON:

O R,

## *THE FRATERNAL VICTIM.*

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### LETTER LIV.

[ No. I. ]

closed by Mr. Meredith to Viscount Malcomb.]

MR. MEREDITH TO MR. OSBORN.

**Y**OU bid me be minute whenever I write, and beg I will conceal nothing that may concern you or myself. What a task have you imposed upon your friend! even that of wounding a bosom he respects and esteems.

Would I could disguise the fatal truths, but they are too glaring. I know too well the pangs attendant upon love, not to feel the sharpness of those you are going to feel. I have suffered a concealed passion for your adorable  
A 2 sister

sister to prey upon my heart, for what could a younger brother like me pretend to? Miss Osborn merits a better fate, and I am contented to suffer alone; but this is not the worst, by telling you I am wretched, I hope to divide your attention, whilst I proceed to say, the idol of your heart is false!—yes, my dear Osborn, the fair faithless Charlotte has forgot your love, your probity, and her own vows. Forgetful that you have explored the scorching desert and burning shores of Indostan for her alone, she is seduced by a false glare of grandeur and the empty pageantry of a title.

I say not this upon slight or trivial grounds; by chance the inclosed convincing proof of her inconstancy fell into my hands, that picture, which the inscription upon the back evinces was once designed for you, was given to a servant to be conveyed to another. A bribe secured the messenger, and I seized it not only as your right, but to prevent the triumph over my friend. Read the inclosed with attention, and despise the woman who can thus intend to trifle with the feelings of a man of honour, treat her at your return with the contempt she merits. Enthusiastic friend.

friendship has ever distinguished my character, and since this discovery I can scarce contain my resentment in her presence.

In my last I mentioned the marriage of Lady Juliana; with pleasure I can assure you of his Lordship's reformation; but I much fear Lady Ormeston does not take sufficient pains to render it permanent. A wife always gloomy and in tears, can be agreeable to no man, and such a conduct is matter of surprize to all that know the voluntary manner in which Lady Juliana at last gave herself to his Lordship. I was at the Vale not long ago; your mother was, as usual, polite and charming; but your sister—ah, Osborn, if I dared give vent to the passion which overcomes me, to the language of adoration, I should paint her but half what my imagination forms her! she sighed when she spoke of you. I wished, presumptuously wished the sigh had been for me; but you know me too well, Henry, to doubt my respectful reverence for the sister of my friend, and I solemnly assure you, that unless some lucky augmentation of fortune brings me nearer upon a level with herself, that my lips shall ever be reli-

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giously closed. I think it a meanness below a man of honour to bring poverty and disgrace upon the woman he loves. Hasten, my dear Osborn, your return to England, fly to the arms of soothing friendship for consolation, scorn the fickle minded Charlotte, and seek amidst the circles of British fair for one, who though she may not perhaps possess her external graces, may possess those she wants, the never fading beauties of the mind.

Yours sincerely,

J. MEREDITH.

L E T-

LETTER LV.

[ No. II. ]

[ Enclosed with the preceding. ]

MISS MARSDEN TO VISCOUNT MALCOMB.

WITH this letter, my dear Viscount will receive what he has so earnestly requested, the picture of the woman honoured by his esteem; I would not efface the inscription, let the sacrifice be complete.

You left me I think rather displeased last night; indeed if female decorum restrained me from expressing all you wished, my eyes were I fear but too faithful interpreters of my sentiments, and when I refused hearing you longer on the subject of our approaching nuptials, it proceeded entirely from the dread of Lady Ormeston's suspecting our designs ere we wish to publish them.

Cast not a thought upon my past attachment, however strong it may once have been, there exists no longer a sentiment of partiality but for yourself; I



shall not go out this evening; you will find me in the dressing room; come, and be assured of the affection of

Your

C. MARSDEN.

## LETTER LVI.

( No. III. )

MR. OSBORN TO MR. MEREDITH.

My worthy Friend,

**Y**OUR intelligence has wrung my very soul. Heavens! what have I done to experience such trials, such ingratitude, but I will revenge myself by contempt of the faithless syren, and by heavens if she possesses a single grain of feeling, I will rouse it by the keen satire of my reproaches.

But for the picture and letter, such an angel did I think her, that not even

even your testimony would have gained credit.

Ah, Charlotte! Charlotte! perhaps at the moment I fondly whispered to myself, this enables me to offer my hand to the woman of my heart, at that very moment perhaps thou wast studying to betray me; but the time will arrive, when the injured Osborn will stand before you, when he will tell you——what? that he hates——no——never.

Meredith, I am still a fool, a woman's fool. That picture, although the greatest proof of her fallhood, yet (although conscious of my weakness) I gaze upon with unsatiated pleasure, hid in my bosom from all eyes but my own, whenever unobserved, I steal forth and devour it with fondness. Even now whilst I look at it, it seems to smile in the same manner she did when I first beheld her. I am fully determined however to see her, justification I want none; and if single I will upbraid, but if before my arrival she is the wife of another, far be it from me to disturb the felicity she has deprived me of ever tasting.

I must write no more on the subject, I must remember her no more, or



TO JULIANA ORMESTON: OR,

in five minutes I shall distrust even your sincerity, commit to the flames that paper which has undone me, and press to my bosom the portrait of my Charlotte in all her dazzling charms.

You may expect me almost as soon as my letter; if you are in town I shall first see you; if not, meet me at the Vale; where your presence will be ever welcome; and believe me, my friend, so little do I value riches in others that I shall be happy if my Delia consents to accelerate a union with so worthy a man. Adieu.

H. OSBORN.

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## LETTER LVII.

VISCOUNT MALCOMB TO MR. MEREDITH.

DEAR JACK,

I Have read all the contents of your express, and must say that you have done wonders, I shall govern myself entirely by your directions;

directions; my demeanour here is respect itself, and I am blest with Miss Marsden's company, who smiles and converses in all her native ease.

Juliana calls me once more her dear brother; Lady Harcourt romps, and laughs with more vivacity than ever and Delia is as mild and as modest as ever. Never surely, Meredith, was such a group of women assembled together. Seriously, Jack, sometimes I think with Charlotte I could reform, and be honest. I expect we shall have a fine storm. Perhaps in the moment of passion, the once despised Malcomb may be made the instrument of revenge.

I will really marry her, if the perverse gipsy does not tire out my patience; but if she does she must abide by the consequence, for Osborn shall not have her, if plotting or force avail any thing. In respect to Miss Osborn, if her brother should not, I will make it worth your while to marry her, her influence would be of service; Charlotte has not a thought concealed from her, and her looks and words are all persuasive.

You know ere this that Ormiston has not been slow in obeying your summons; his transports at the thought of recovering his incognita were scarce  
sup.

suppressed before my sister, to whom he pleaded such indispensable business, that he set off the same evening, he excused himself indeed in so handsome a manner, that even the sad eyes of Juliana beamed a smile of gratitude for the concern her Lord expressed at leaving her.

I have no patience with my sister's moping manner of life, why does she not enter into pleasures, and if my Lord runs astray, kill the thought in dissipation? Charlotte I am sure glories that I still drag her chains, and smiles only to rivet them still closer; but beware, Charlotte; beware that one day you do not repent of having smiled upon a man whose love can only be equalled by his pride, and who can bear being refused, but not having another preferred before him.

I lead a confounded stupid life here, and miss the society of you good fellows, more especially since Ormeston has left us, his brother is gone also, though he is not one of us. About eight years ago, when a youth, I had some thoughts he would turn out well, but he is now grown serious and sentimental; he is admired by Charlotte, Delia, and Juliana; he exactly suits their  
ideas

ideas. Let me intreat you, Meredith, to hasten the denouement of this affair, for I cannot dissemble much longer.

Adieu,

MALCOMB.

L E T T E R LVIII.

MR. MEREDITH TO THE VISCOUNT.

My dear James,

I Have just snatched a moment to tell you that before this time to morrow you will see Osborn, stand therefore well upon your guard; he arrived this morning. I have confirmed every suspicion tenfold; I was enabled by Ormeston's intelligence to inform him that you were all at Harcourt Castle; this news redoubled his eagerness to be gone. I think you have every thing to hope as well as myself, as he has promised his good offices with his sister. Ormeston

Ormeston has had a grand repulse by letter from his little rustic, but the house being comeatable, he will, I doubt not, in a few days carry his point.

Yours,

MEREDITH.

## LETTER LIX.

LADY HARCOURT TO LORD HARCOURT

My dear Ned,

ACCORDING to the plan we formed before Lord Ormeston left us, we all last Thursday quitted Ormeston House, and arrived the same night at Harcourt Castle, but something you have yet to learn so incredibly extraordinary, that though four-and-twenty hours are elapsed since my eyes beheld the phenomenon, I can scarce bring myself to credit it; but I ought to recollect that you possess at least one feminine quality, namely,



ly, curiosity, and therefore will hasten to gratify it as soon as possible.

Know then that Charlotte and Delia were so impatient to see Mrs. Osborn, that we dropped them at the Vale in our way home, promising to breakfast with them the next morning. Lady Ormeston and the Viscount were of course my guests; agreeable to our engagement we got there very early, and before ten were all in the breakfast room, except Charlotte. Lord Frederic had joined our party, and all was harmony and good humour. Presently the rattling of a carriage proclaimed the arrival of a visiter; we all flew to the window, and all exclaimed together, Henry Osborn! Delia and the gentlemen flew out to meet him; Mrs. Osborn only reached the door, and clasped him in a transport to her maternal bosom; we all surrounded the interesting group (for Delia embraced her brother) to offer our congratulations; when the door from the garden opened, and Charlotte, unconscious of this wished for arrival, entered the parlour; she stood for a moment as if doubting her senses, and then flew to her expected Henry. But imagine my dear Ned,

his

his reception of his charmer, and our amazement at seeing him gently repulse her offered hand, bow respectfully to her, and with a visible constraint, hoped Miss Marsden was well, and turned round to his mother and sister.

We all started at each other, the Viscount could not restrain a smile of satisfaction, and I was totally disappointed, as I had long anticipated the meeting of these turtle doves. The only construction I could put upon it was, that it must be the fashion in India; but my poor friend could not content herself with this very reasonable supposition. She turned pale, and falling into Mrs. Osborn's arms, hid her face bathed in tears, in her bosom; this was almost more than that dear woman could bear, she pressed the weeping Charlotte in her arms, and loud sobs prevented her articulation, but her looks were anxiously fixed on Henry, who stood motionless. Delia held his hand, she spoke to him, he seemed not to hear her, to see nothing, till Charlotte sunk fainting to the ground; then, at the moment that the Viscount attempted to raise her, he seemed roused from his reverie, he rudely pushed him on one side,



side, and tenderly bore Charlotte in his arms to the sofa; he supported her till recovered, and held her hand seemingly unconscious of what he did.

Mortification and wounded pride prevented her speaking, but she withdrew her hand. He started, looked at her, sighed, and with rage in his countenance, rushed into the next room, and locked the door. We heard him throw himself on the ground, and commit numberless extravagances.

Indeed, Ned, I think his senses must be absolutely deranged. After a little pause, and evident struggle, Charlotte arose, and embracing Mrs. Osborn and Delia, adieu, said she, my estimable, my regretted friends; I dare never hope to call you by more endearing names. Delia, you will ever find me tender and affectionate; I have not deserved this from your brother, and attend an explanation with impatience. She took hold of my arm, the ladies were unable to answer her, and we hastened to the carriage; a dismal ride we had to Harcourt-Castle. Poor Lady Ormeston can never afford tear for tear and sigh for sigh; I endeavoured to make them cheerful but in vain.

The

The Viscount behaved charmingly, he seemed to forget that he had ever contended for the love of Charlotte, offered to return to the Vale, and seek from Henry Osborn an explanation. This her pride forbade assent to; she said she would never ~~shun~~ his justification, but scorned to seek it. We all opposed his going likewise. After dinner we strolled to the Temple of Friendship, where I had ordered fruit, ices, &c. The Viscount read Ossian's Poems to us; he left off where the bard in a sublime and elevated manner describes the death of Fingal, and the vision of the ghosts fleeing on the blue mists over the hills. We took a walk through the plantation, and returned in about an hour to the temple. We found the book open upon the altar of love and friendship; and in a blank leaf was written with a pencil these lines.

“ Well hast thou described, immortal bard, the grief of the parent who mourned in thy hero the hope of his white locks; ah, that my spirit floated like his over the brown heath and dissolved in the morning mist, for lost is the hope of my days! short and fleeting will be their number. How happy, if the hand of heaven  
would

would sever at this moment the cords of existence before the altar of love and friendship: with my expiring breath I should pronounce the names of those endearing ties, the enjoyment of which are snatched for ever from the hope of a wretched being."

Charlotte recognized the well known hand of Henry Osborn, and her indignation gave way to pity, as we all join in thinking his intellects affected. Lord Frederic just then returned from a ride to the Vale, did not see Mr. Osborn, which we could well account for. Delia told him her mother had suffered a great deal since the morning, and that her brother was obstinate in not speaking of Miss Marsden; on any other subject he was tolerably cheerful. He is certainly either mad or jealous, one is equally as bad as the other, and if the latter is the case, a reconciliation will be soon brought about. You have influence, so has Sir George, bring him down with you, and I doubt not but he will unbosom himself to you.

We are happy ourselves, my dear Ned, and the only way to merit its continuance is to endeavour to make others equally so. Hasten then, my beloved

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beloved Harcourt, join your exertions with those of your Anna to restore peace to the wounded bosoms of our friends. The dear boy is well, and grows very like his father, extremely saucy.

Yours,

A. H.

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## LETTER LX.

MRS. OSBORN TO MISS MARSDEN.

**W**ILL not every thing that comes from the hand of an Osborn be rejected as a fresh insult, by the ill-treated amiable Charlotte? but I know her capable of distinguishing, and fear not to address her.

Think not I mean to excuse the behaviour of my son, no, it cannot be palliated. However appearances may condemn, the shining merits of  
M<sup>rs</sup>

Miss Marsden are too conspicuous, and her goodness of heart too well known, to doubt she could easily confute every black insinuation. I write then, my sweet girl, merely to give ease to a heart suffering deeply on your account, to assure you, that if I am denied the happiness of calling you daughter, I never will part with the title of your friend. In that capacity I now present myself before you. My son doubtless is more an object of compassion than resentment, he had trifled with the happiness he had in view, and is rewarded, as all triflers should, in so serious a case, by the loss of it. Delia would excuse her brother; she offers in his extenuation, that he is jealous, but my feelings for you are so trembly alive, that I can scarce admit the plea; if jealous, on what grounds? what appearances could have even given rise to reports sufficiently strong to give cause for it? Besides, surely Henry Osborn would not credit mere report; I can only ascribe it to unwarrantable caprice, by which he has deprived me of all the fond hopes of my age; I had pleased myself with the idea of beholding your loves united, of  
 seeing



seeing your felicity, and leaving my dear Delia, if heaven should call me speedily from this world, in the protection of a sister, whose love would in a great degree supply the loss of her maternal friend; but how fleeting is the fabric of human happiness! How quickly by the hand of disappointment is the cup of pleasure dashed from our lips ere we have tasted the enlivening contents.

But as I have from the resources of reason borne hitherto with resignation those trials with which providence has thought fit to afflict me, I must still exert the fortitude which befriended me. Aid me, my dear Charlotte, by your example, tell me you are not unhappy, that your peace of mind is recovering its usual serenity; if my presence will not recal too forcibly a disagreeable scene, I will avail myself of the small distance between us to see you often. I would not wound your delicacy by so improper a request as the asking your presence in a house which you can remember only with disgust. Delia is miserable; her brother sees it, and flies us all.

Write to me, my dear Charlotte,  
tell

tell me if my coming to Harcourt-Castle will not affect you too much. Heaven knows I would not for worlds give your bosom an additional pang.

Yours,

M. OSBORN.

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## LETTER LXI.

MISS MARSDEN TO MRS. OSBORN.

**I** Hasten, my dear Mrs. Osborn, to give way to the emotions of my full heart, it bursts towards you with gratitude, reverence, grief, and love! Ah, my honoured friend, how vainly do you advise the draught of oblivion! Even if I loved no longer, think you not that the humiliation I have sustained, would not leave behind some traces, which the slow finger of time will scarce be able to erase. God of heaven! to be despised, repulsed, and treated like the



the most abject and fallen of my sex! it is not to be supported with moderation. Was it an action worthy of Henry Osborn, to whom I had revealed every emotion, every thought of a heart which, though a woman's, beats perhaps as high with honour as his own? But unhappy the female who like me acknowledges her love; proud of their conquest, the deceivers wish no more; and the too candid fair is left like me, with scorn.

I would forget the past, but the scene rushes each moment fresh before me. I behold his averted face, I see his extended arm, which rejects a too faithful friend; I pity his error, I abhor his conduct, but still love him. Perhaps in the moment that I refuse mediation, I do the most justice to his many virtues. I accept with every sensation of esteem and gratitude your proffered friendship, and I must cease to exist ere I forget this noble instance of your disinterestedness. Delia, my charming friend also shall never be obliterated from the place she holds in her Charlotte's love.

You kindly, my dear friend, induce me to exert my fortitude, by requesting from me an example of it. Alas, how

how difficult is it to teach that lesson to a heart that rebels against every remedy. It paints Henry Osborn continually before me, not unfaithful, stern, or furious, but what he once was, endeared with every captivating, every attractive grace; and I blush whilst I confess that I have the weakness sometimes to palliate, and endeavour to myself to find excuses for his present altered conduct.

Your presence, my revered Mrs. Osborn, will be ever seasonable; even now it will afford me a melancholy pleasure, and be of service in reminding me of the past, and strengthening the resolutions pride and delicacy have combined to form. Come, then, and mingle your tears with mine; behold the wretch reduced from the height of happiness by a blind confidence. Come and behold the change of a few days; in one word, the work of——. Hold, rash woman, why wouldst thou wound the bosom of his mother by thy vain complaints; suffer in silence, and tear from thy brow the trace of sorrow.

Dearest, best of women, heed not my sufferings; remember the dear perfidious is your son, and his return to

duty and affection will make your declining years happy.

How weak, how irresolute am I! fly to my aid, rouse every spark of dormant pride, tell me I am contemned, that I must stifle my feelings under the mask of calmness, and assume the smile of pleasure, that it is the general cause of the sex, and I must vindicate it. Tell me all this, and I will, I must obey the dictates of insulted virtue, though my oppressed heart should burst with the war of contending passions.

Adieu, most respectable friends, and believe that your affectionate Charlotte will count every hour with impatience till she beholds you.

## L E T T E R LXII.

LADY HARCOURT TO LORD HARCOURT.

**D**O you know, Ned, that confirmed by your last letter, I am become violently jealous both of you and that fright Sir George. I have no idea what the business can be that detains you both in the middle of the dog-days in London, and if you do not arrive at the expiration of three days, shall certainly set off to see in what manner you are both employed. But, Lord help me, I rally when I have cause to be more serious. How could you make use of such a terrible expression, "I will shew myself worthy of being Miss Marsden's friend; Henry Osborn has honour, and must account for his behaviour." Charlotte has wept anew almost ever since I read it to her, for fear you should be embroiled with this mad lover of her's (for mad he certainly is in my mind) therefore to quiet both wife and friend, pray leave all your Quixote



airs behind you, and come here as a quiet mediator, rather than a knight-errant. Saucy Sir George, though he praised Charlotte, vanity induces Anna to think she was included in the compliment.

I am out of all patience with the Ormestons and Malcombs; always some fresh discovery of vice or deception. Your suspicion of Lord Ormeston's frequent visits to a house of indifferent fame, next door to Sir George's lodgings, accounts for his protracted absence. You may be right in your opinion of the Viscount, as you say such sudden changes are seldom permanent, and we have continually seen, that he "can vary shape at will." At present he seems but to exist in the presence of Charlotte; he flies all company but hers and a Mr. Meredith, a grave, hypocritical, ill-looking man, a violent friend of Osborn's, and now upon a visit at Sanson-Vale.

Lady Ormeston quits us to-morrow; Delia Osborn accompanies her, though her mother unwillingly spares her, and her brother is displeased at her going. I believe the disagreeable assiduities of Meredith alone drive her from her mother

ther at a time when from lowness of spirits she so much wants her.

The following incident I believe has determined Juliana to quit us so soon, owing to Charlotte's recent chagrin, we saw no regular company, chance visitors alone were admitted; and yesterday we had two with a witness; I am sure you will never guess, it was certainly the oddest thing in nature that the men should have stumbled upon such a visit together; but not to keep you longer in suspense, imagine the drawing-room door opened, and enter Mr. Campbell, introducing my old admirer, Mr. Barnston.

It seems the former is on a visit to the latter, and in one of their excursions Campbell proposed paying their respects at Harcourt-Castle, and promised to introduce Barnston, who little thought of meeting in the person of Lady Harcourt, the once rejected Anna Morley. Campbell as little dreamt of meeting with Lady Ormeston; and the first appearance of all four was truly ludicrous, if I may be allowed to express myself thus of Campbell and Juliana. I was the first that recovered from my surprize. I received my guests with ease, and a pretty general conversation

B 3

ensued;

ensued; the men strove to be gay, but barely succeeded. Lady Ormeston behaved like an angel, she spoke but little, and her conversation was addressed to me only. Campbell seemed rivetted, and though Barnston hinted several times taking leave, he appeared not to understand him. In about an hour the Viscount returned from riding; how my heart palpitated when I heard his voice upon the staircase; he almost started back when he first discovered my visitors, but recollecting I suppose where he was, bowed, and seated himself by the side of Charlotte. I saw with pain the glances which escaped from him and Campbell. Lord Frederic kindly relieved my distress, by telling the latter we all believed him gone to Italy. He smiled; it has been reported so, my Lord, but my present journey has extended no farther than that gentleman's estate, looking towards Mr. Barnston.

Lady Ormeston sat long enough to shew the command she has gained over her feelings, and then arose, pleading an engagement to spend the day at Sanson-Vale. Campbell's eyes expressed grief and resentment at what he plainly saw was a pretence to quit the room



room where he was. Her brother's looks and ours applauded her. Lord Frederic led her out, and at his return gaily addressed her thus :

Come, my dear Lady Harcourt, I know you love harmony and good fellowship, do you undertake my brother and I will try to persuade Mr. Campbell to let Harcourt-Castle witness their reconciliation, and induce them to think that the cause of their animosity being entirely removed by my sister's marriage, all rancour should be buried in oblivion, and the anxieties of their mutual friends on their accounts, be entirely ended.

I most willingly seconded his generous intention, and after a very slight altercation (that inexplicable being the Viscount, once the foremost to seek and to offend) rose from his seat and tendered his hand. Campbell accepted it, but like me seemed to doubt the permanency of their reconciliation. His noble soul I plainly saw had not yet forgot all the sufferings of poor Juliana, or the baseness of her brother.

After this the two gentlemen consequently staid dinner. I was not pleased with the gaiety of Barnston's manner, he has very soon forgot my empire.

Excuse, dear Ned, this folly of vanity, it escaped my pen unawares, but I am provoked at the sex in general, they talk of dying, running mad, and all the paraphernalia of love, with such ease as if they really meant all they said, but in a short space the illusion vanishes, they are restored to their senses, their idol dwindles to a mere mortal, and they act again like reasonable beings. In short, after all, I think you and I who met, took a fancy to each other, and married without all this mighty bustle, and who continue to jog on quietly and serenely together, stand a much better chance for happiness than those romantic dying folks; I except Charlotte and Juliana, the one has ill-treatment to plead, the other family disagreeables.

But to return to my visitors, before they took leave, Campbell drew me on one side, his complaints were, I assure you, not a few; he blames Juliana less than I imagined he would, and ascribes her actions as principally resulting from his journey to Montpellier. I am sorry to say he is far from beholding her in the light he ought, he speaks of her not only in a high style, but with perfect raptures, and  
his

his very existence seems to depend upon hers. I intreated him to avoid her as much as possible, as though from Lady Ormiston's refined principles of honour and high sense of duty, no all could be expected, even were they to meet upon familiar terms, yet I appealed to his own feelings, whether frequent meetings could be pleasant to either, and whether he could be ungenerous enough to direct the breath of slander towards the woman who had already suffered so much through his means? He shook his head, what a very hard lesson do you teach me, Lady Harcourt, but I will study it, and you shall behold the empire of honour and virtue. He left me sitting on the window, and Mr. Barnston advanced, he hemmed, looked very wise, and paid me many splendid compliments on the happiness I seemed to enjoy; heaved a sigh, looked to see I suppose if any one was in hearing, and was beginning to make a grave, and doubtless edifying speech, concerning our separation; when, hating to have my good humour interrupted by a recapitulation of misfortunes you have so generously taught me to forget, I stopped him by some enquiries about Brook-Hill; thus eva-

ding any particular discourse. Early in the evening they took their leaves, first promising to renew their visit when my Lord honours Harcourt-Castle with his presence.

Lady Ormeston returned, we were all loud in her praise, and none more so than the Viscount; his behaviour of this day was rewarded by a sweet smile from Charlotte.

Henry Osborn is extremely ill, and it is with great difficulty Juliana has been able to persuade Delia to accompany her; but the physicians having pronounced her brother's fever epidemic, her mother, though proof against every thought of consulting her own safety, insists upon Delia's compliance.

Lady Ormeston has received a letter from his Lordship; he slightly expresses his concern at being so long absent, flatters her with the prospect of her father's company, and begs she will remain in the country to receive him. I make no doubt but some artful creature has estranged his affections from this matchless woman, or perhaps he is adding some guiltless innocent to the number of hopeless victims devoted to vice and misery.

Ah,



Ah, my dear Edward, how truly do I commiserate the lot of those unfortunates, plunged perhaps by want, treachery, or unguarded confidence, into guilt and infamy, from whence the impossibility of escaping the censures of an unfeeling world, and the little hope if any which remains of their ever regaining the lost esteem of their friends, they are driven into fresh errors, till they become the sport of one sex and contempt of both. How glorious would be the attempt to snatch from such aggravated horrors, those among the many who have not quite lost the remembrance, as well as name of virtue.

How divine would be the reflections of that mind, which could boast of having saved so many beautiful and once amiable fellow creatures from present and eternal ruin. I should be more proud of having contributed towards such an undertaking, than any dignity that could be offered me. Adieu, my beloved husband, shorten your absence as much as possible, the idea of its being painful to her, will surely make you hasten to

Your

A. HARCOURT.

L E T-



## L E T T E R LXIII.

LADY HARCOURT TO MISS OSBORN.

YOU left me the other day, my charming friend, expecting Lord Harcourt with the utmost impatience; but you will readily imagine what confidence the man must possess, to present to his wife (who by the bye never was famed for great personal beauty) one of the most elegant and interesting of women, under his avowed protection; yet so it was, and he prepared me by letter, about an hour before their arrival, to receive my new guest; but I refer to his letter inclosed, read it here, and my addenda afterwards,

L E T.

## L E T T E R LXIV.

LORD HARCOURT TO LADY HARCOURT.

I Dedicate the remainder of this eventful night to my Anna, as I would wish her to know, that being precluded the exercising my functions of knight-errantry in the precincts of Sanfon-Vale, I mean to-morrow at my return home, to produce a striking proof of its success in London; though Sir George has robbed me of half the laurel.

I had agreed to spend the night at Sir George's lodgings, that we might be ready to set forwards in the morning together; I went about dusk, and found him at home. We were scarcely seated, before a loud knocking at the street door was heard; Sir George rung the bell, but in an instant the room door flew open, and a most elegant woman rushed in, whose appearance manifested the utmost terror and disorder. In as much as the dusk would permit us to observe, she seemed very handsome; a gentleman pursued her. She ran up to me, exclaiming wildly, Oh, save me! save

save me! He desired me not to pay any attention to his unfortunate sister, who to the great grief of himself and family, from some late imprudences was become insane. His voice I was no stranger to, but all my attention was directed to the lady, who grasping my arm, exclaimed in a tone of the deepest anguish; believe him not! ah! I am no relation, but a poor destined victim, betrayed into his power by one of the worst of human beings. The gentleman acted by turns the enraged and the afflicted brother to a miracle; but unluckily candles at that moment being brought, discovered that we were all well acquainted, it being no other than Lord Ormeston.

He soon recovered his native ease, and, smiling, said, come, come, my Lord, you know better than to interfere in this manner; this girl has already cost me an immense sum and now pretends to coy it, merely to extort more from my blind attachment to her. Pronouncing these words, he would have approached her; I felt her tremble, and begged she would not give way to fear, for placing myself before her, she had nothing to apprehend. I suppose I looked determined,

terminated, for he stepped back, and said with fury in his eyes, 'tis well, my Lord, you'll answer this. I was in a passion; his base unworthy treatment of this unknown lady had roused my feelings; his persisting in his libertine intention, converted them to resentment, and I was preparing to retort with acrimonious heat, when Sir George prevented me by addressing Lord Ormeston very seriously thus:

I am a privileged man, my Lord, by being some years older than either of you, and can therefore interfere with more propriety in this affair; and I must tell you plainly, you have neither acted like a gentleman nor man of honour; this lady's disorder is not that of premeditated deceit, indeed delicacy and virtuous indignation are visibly to be seen in her manner. I offer her my protection, which if she accepts, I will seal with the last drop of my blood if needful. The Lady seized his hand and bathed it with the drops of grateful sensibility.

Never did Sir George appear more himself; I shrunk from a comparison with him. He continued, chuse, my Lord, either release this Lady for ever from your disgustful pursuit, or let me

me hear from you at Harcourt-Castle, whither I am going to-morrow morning; but if you will rather accept from me the advice of a friend, it is to retire and bury all that has past in oblivion; you may command the silence of Lord Harcourt and myself for the sake of your amiable wife, and we will use our endeavours with this Lady from the same motive, if not to forgive your base attempt, at least to conceal it.

He stamped at the mention of his wife, and cursing the hour that united them, and our interference, rushed out of the house. Poor Juliana! with how much more reason ought she to detest the moment that made her the wife of such a wretch.

But now my dear Anna, that we are left masters of the field, do not let jealousy usurp a place in your gentle bosom, but rather call forth all your natural goodness and benignity of soul, to feel for this distressed Lady. Her countenance displays innocence itself, and yet there is an elevation, a nobleness of soul perceptible on the first sight of her. Her elegance of manners indicates an early knowledge of the polite world. In short,



short, she is enchanting enough to excuse Ormesion's intended breach of conjugal fidelity; but perhaps you will think some further account of this Lady necessary, previous to a personal introducing of her into your house.

After the hurry of her spirits had a little subsided, and we were seated, Sir George begged to know if there was any Lady he could either send for or convey her to, or any relation whom—she interrupted him with the exclamation of, alas, I had once a friend, pointed to her sable dress (for she was in mourning) and burst into tears; as if ashamed of this emotion, she averted her head and seemed to struggle for composure; in a few moments she not only assumed it, but also a degree of firmness, and spoke thus.

After the generous protection you have just now offered me, how strange must appear my declaration, that I have but one friend in the world, and that without his consent I cannot reveal at large the many melancholy events which have reduced me to want it; but to satisfy you that I am not unworthy of your notice, I will venture  
to

to tell you, that I believe myself descended from a noble family, though by a train of accidents rendered an alien from it. A lady had the charge of me, in memory of whom I shed these tears; on the day of her death she united me to a man possessed of every virtue, one whom I had long esteemed, and who had long entertained for me a reciprocal sentiment. Our nuptials were conducted with the utmost privacy, on account of my friend's fast increasing malady, and for fear an uncle of my husband's should hear it, without his approbation being previously obtained. My delicacy was alarmed at so clandestine a union; he overruled every objection, and promised the moment he saw me quietly settled, and relieved from my present anxiety, he would take post to his uncle's and lay before him the whole affair.

I should have told you, that previous to this, during our abode in Devonshire, I had frequently met this gentleman, from whom you have delivered me, and been insulted by his base proposals so often, that we left Devonshire entirely upon his account, and came to Hounslow. Upon the road thither, chance  
threw

threw us in the way of this most amiable of men, who after a search of some years had concluded his Matilda lost for ever. But to return, the tear of pious joy dropped from the eyes of my inestimable friend whilst she blest our union. Matilda, said she, taking both my hands, I fear I shall mark your bridal day with sorrows, but it is my supreme delight to reflect that I leave you the wife of a man of honour, I have from day to day protracted a narration concerning your birth, which will harrow up your very soul; I was willing first of all to receive such testimonies as would have enabled me to console your grief for the past, by a restoration of friends, fortune and rank, but life ebbs apace, and after having dedicated twenty-five years to you, I shall not have the consolation of beholding you as I have ever wished; I have often lamented to myself my narrow income, the tear of affection has oft strayed down my cheek as I regarded you; I have evaded your enquiries. Alas, what would it have availed thee to have known in early youth, that thou wast born the child of misfortune!

Here my emotions became violent; perhaps, I cried, also the offspring of  
 shame!

shame! this mystery——Hold, presumptuous girl, interrupted she, exerting all her strength, have you no confidence in my friendship; think you that I have devoted so many years to conceal a mystery I was acquainted with the cause of? but above all, beware how you trample sacrilegiously upon the ashes of your revered, your suffering, fainted mother.

Alas, cried I, softened to the utmost, if I have lost each tender filial claim, what avails my knowledge of relations, who will perhaps despise and suspect my claim, so long unheard of? Be patient, replied she, in a broken and interrupted voice, if the proofs I await be delayed, seek them in France, I leave to your generous husband the completion of that task I have begun with so much pleasure——Tell your father——here her voice failed, and straining me in her feeble arms, fainted; convulsions followed with frightful rapidity, and before night she expired.

It was some time before the unwearied attentions of my husband could reconcile me to the loss I had sustained. He received many letters from his uncle and brother, and his presence with the former becoming indispensibly necessary,



tary, he proposed leaving me at Hounslow, the situation being very retired, promising at his return to publish our marriage. I found myself miserable when deprived of his company, and the only consolation I experienced was from his letters. The mistress of the house came to me one day and told me, that she was going to quit her house in a few days, having sold it very much to her advantage, and apologizing for the shortness of the notice. I was embarrassed; she saw it, and told me if I had no objection to London, she had a sister there who also let lodgings, and who would be glad to have me on my own terms.

I wrote to my husband, whose answer was, I had better go there, as a month would now be the utmost limits of our separation. I went immediately, and was received with the most specious civility, and till this day knew not the character of the house my vile landlady at Hounslow had brought me to.

I was as usual reading this afternoon, when the door opened without any ceremony, and the gentleman who had persecuted me in Devonshire appeared; I rose and haughtily demanded his business and why he insulted me in my

OWN



own apartment? He soon gave me to understand he was master in that house, and I had better quietly submit. I scorned to return him an answer, and turning to the bell found it broke, intentionally no doubt; I ran to the windows, they were fastened; I shrieked, but in vain, no one appeared, and the base wretch had the inhumanity to smile at my distress. Irritated by his insolence, and terrified by my impending danger, I made a bold attempt at the door, and succeeded; I flew down stairs. The woman of the house in vain attempted to stop me, I pushed past her, and afraid of being seized, I fortunately sought an asylum at your door; my only hope was in the generosity of the inhabitants, nor has it been groundless; you in return have the glorious reflection, that the wife of a man of honour has been saved from eternal distress by your generous interpositions, this she addressed to us both:

Sir George thanked her in the most polite manner for the account she had been pleased to give us; we proposed her going with us to Harcourt-Castle, from whence, sanctioned by your protection, she could write to her husband. She

She saw the propriety of the proposal, and acquiesced. I begged to know by what name I was to introduce her to my Anna. Here she almost awakened suspicion, by begging I would not press her to reveal her name till she knew her husband approved her conduct, and gave his sanction, to her publishing their marriage; I will not, added she, deceive you or debase myself by assuming a fictitious one, as I might do, but will rather intrude farther on your generosity. This refusal I was obliged to put up with, and surely I know my Anna too well to think she will either blame or call me credulous. I know your benevolent disposition so well, that if this lady, which Heaven forefend, should prove an impostor, that you will rather try every art in your power to detach her from the paths of vice, than by haughtily despising, render her return to virtue impracticable.

Sir George is absolutely enraptured with her, and has been poetically calling her the representative of virtue, the image of exalted, of ennobled worth. I never heard him praise any woman so warmly before, except his lamented Caroline and your ladyship,  
I must

I must bring in the latter to make you smile on Sir George and your Edward, when they present their new-found prodigy, your triumphant rival, in all the glare of beauty before your astonished view.

But prithee, Ned, says Anna, with one of her arch inquisitive smiles, now you have disposed of the lady for to-morrow, pray what may become of her to-night? True, I had forgot that punctilio. Know then, that by mutual consent we adjourned to our house, where I put our fair guest into the care of your Ladyship's housekeeper, who conducted her to your ladyship's apartment; Sir George has taken possession of that designed for Uncle Morley, and when I have done scribbling to my Lady-wife, I shall seek one in some part of the house or other.

Tell Miss Marsden I may be able to render the same service without the horrors she fears may ensue. I had more to add, but Morpheus is too powerful to be resisted any longer. Adieu, and believe me

Affectionately yours,

E. H.

LADY

LADY HARCOURT TO MISS OSBORN.

[Conclusion of Letter LXIII.]

WHAT think you now, Delia, of Lord Ormeston? I dare not review the subject; every idea suggests the most painful fears for Juliana, I dread his return, heaven knows to what lengths his brutality may drive him, what inventions he may set on foot to render her more wretched. I have sent you with all speed the particulars, as Lady Ormeston may hear the story, and stand in need of the consolations of friendship.

Though long convinced of her husband's neglect, she would be doubly wounded by beholding the object of his present defection, and I trust she will never know it. I think the air of distinction and elevated virtue visible in this lady, sufficient to awe the most abandoned of mankind. You must send me back the letter, for Charlotte as yet knows nothing of the matter, and you know I am a bad historian.

You will wonder at what I have said of Miss Marsden, but she is at Sanfon-

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Vale.



Vale. Be not alarmed, my dear, your brother is rather worse, and has been light-headed ever since you went away ; your mother begged if it would not be too great a favour, to see Charlotte for ten minutes. Charlotte, though wounded to the heart at your brother's illness, and the idea of going to the house, from which he had in a manner driven her, yet loves your mother too well to deny her any thing. She went and found Mrs. Osborn so exceeding low, that Charlotte, forgetting all her own sufferings and the risk she would run, insisted upon remaining at the Vale till your return, or the recovery of your brother, provided he was kept in perfect ignorance of her having been there.

I have known Miss Marsden triumph on many occasions, but I never saw her conquer herself so nobly as at this moment, she looked almost more than mortal, whilst supporting your venerable mother, and wiping away the tears which bedewed her cheeks. I left her with regret, but hear from her twice a day. The necessary attentions to my new guest will prevent my sermonizing much to her upon patience and resignation ; her fears are all alive, one moment she  
paints



paints her despair for your brother's illness, the next her fears that he may one day know she has been there; her perplexities redouble every hour, she requests I will take the advantage of her absence to pay my promised visit of a few days at Ormeston-House. I have had some difficulty in persuading my new guest to accompany me, she seems to have some aversion to the name, although we assured her Lord Ormeston was not there; but Sir George has the art, by his persuasive eloquence, of gaining most people to think as he does, and she has at last consented. If you think it proper, you can return with me, though your mother would not hear me on the subject.

I suppose the Viscount will be outrageous when he hears Charlotte is gone to attend his sick rival, and that he hears no more the silver music of her voice, and can behold no more her all subduing smiles. How angry he would be if he knew what a cordial friend I have ever been to his suit. My husband has sent for me, and my brat is screaming, so I have only time to sign

A. HARCOURT.

## L E T T E R L X I V .

VISCOUNT MALCOMB TO J. MEREDITH,  
ESQ.

JACK,

OUR schemes are all likely to be blown to the devil. Charlotte's romantic ideas of friendship overstretching her punctilios and even her pride, have carried her in all the swell of insulted beauty to Sanson-Vale; my father has been here these two days, and knowing my influence over him, you will be less surprized to hear that the Greys have this morning carried him to solicit my haughty fair one in my behalf. I must confess it is carrying my condescension very far, but it is my last effort, for though her greatest fear is that Osborn will know the attention she has paid him, yet know it he certainly will by some means or other, and gratitude may bring on an investigation probably not to our advantage. Curse it, Jack, how cowardly does guilt make one.

Lord and Lady Harcourt are here, and a most lovely woman, who she is I cannot

cannot tell, I have not even heard her name, I shall await the arrival of Ormeston and my charmer's decision with impatience. Should she be yet cruel, I take post to London, to consult thee upon revenge, for that at least I will have ; as for the people here, they may settle their disputes in their own way, I will have no more to do with them.

Lord Ormeston neglects his wife, and so should I. under the same circumstances ; no man loves a wife on whose countenance sorrow and disgust are ever imprinted. Juliana's conduct arises from mere obstinacy. I know the sex sufficiently to be certain in what degree they are entitled to merit from constancy ; their love soon grows weakened by the facility with which they see or attain the object of their desires, but throw a few obstacles in the way, it strengthens beyond a possibility of annihilation. Such, I fear, will influence Miss Marsden to refuse the unlimited proposals my father is authorized to make ; nor is it far different with us, probably was she to comply with my wishes, and willingly give me her hand, in a few months I might be nearly as eager to be unfettered.

Fellows as wild as myself have been tamed by proper management. Lord Harcourt is a living witness; when Ned Stanley, he was one of the most dissipated dogs about town; the ample fortune of his uncle was not adequate to supply his expences, and he was packed off abroad, and yet a woman has had the sway to new mould him to her wishes; but Charlotte at this moment crosses my thoughts, I can think, I can write but of her. Adieu, I rely on your exertions.

MALCOMB.

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L E T T E R L X V .

LADY HARCOURT TO MISS MARSDEN.

WE returned home last night, and a severe cold obliges me to have recourse to my pen, to tell my dear Charlotte the result of our visit to Ormeston-House. Miserable Juliana, to what is she not destined! apprized of her husband's dispo-

dishonourable attempts upon our new guest, she apologized to her in the politest, nay even most affectionate manner, and paid her the greatest attention; she was cheerful after dinner, but seemed studiously so; we were all mirth and good humour, proposing plans to make our return home next day as diversified as we could; I left them to spend half an hour with my little boy, whom as I was dancing in my arms, my woman who knew the story of the unknown lady, ran in, heavens my Lady! Lord Ormeston and his brother are arrived. I ran down, blaming our want of foresight in bringing Matilda thither, but secretly enjoying my Lord's confusion; I met him at the door of the antichamber. Not knowing well what to say, I asked where his brother was. Equally embarrassed, he answered coming up, but the fellow is certainly gone mad, he leaves us again to-morrow; being at the drawing-room door, and Mr. Lumley close behind us prevented more. I expected to see Matilda start from her seat and fly past Lord Ormeston to avoid him (who looked foolish enough) but I was not possessed of the spirit of divination sufficient to foresee,



foresee that she would run into the arms of Augustus Lumley, which she certainly did, giving him at the same time the title of my dear husband. Mr. Lumley who knew nothing of his brother's folly, introduced his amiable wife to us all, at the same time expressing his surprize after having lost every trace of her in London, to find her so unexpectedly with his friends. Embarrassment was visible on every face; he looked around, and turning to his wife, what does this mean? said he. Lord Ormeston unable longer to sustain the shame of the inevitable discovery, broke out into loud invectives against his distressed wife, swore the most dreadful oaths, that she should share the misery her wayward temper had brought upon him. In short, Augustus found but too soon, that his brother's lawless passion had nearly deprived him for ever of his beloved and lately found Matilda, whose story, and portrait, you doubtless remember. His passion rose proportionate to the injury, and had not the gentlemen interposed, I know not to what lengths he might have been carried.

Lord Ormeston left the house, and we spent many hours in soothing the  
terrors

terrors of his lady. Augustus and his amiable wife promised her their unceasing esteem, and it was our united advice (excepting the Viscount, who had left the room) that she should through the means of her brother Frederick, endeavour to obtain a separation from her unworthy husband.

Mr. and Mrs. Lumley readily consented to be our guests till they can settle themselves to their liking; he with some difficulty prevailed upon his uncle to acknowledge her. As they were married, otherwise he told him he never would have consented to his union with an unknown girl. He flew to town to publish his marriage, and ease his Matilda's mind of its sorrow, and heard she had left her lodgings with Sir George Edgecomb, whom he traced to Hatfield, and there lost him; distracted, he accepted his brother's invitation, hoping to find Sir George's retreat from us, and breathing nothing but revenge: the rest I have already related.

Lady Ormeston was too ill to breakfast with us, before we set off; his Lordship had not then returned home; she expects her father to-day. I expect to hear his success, and how you go on

at the Vale by the return of my messenger; you will see how cruel it would have been to have taken Delia from our friend at this moment.

Mr. and Mrs. Lumley join Sir George in compliments. As to my Lord, he says it must be something kinder from him, I therefore leave you to imagine every thing that is charming; so adieu, my beloved Charlotte.

A. HARCOURT.

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L E T T E R LXVI.

MISS MARSDEN TO LADY HARCOURT.

**M**Y dear Anna, what a task have you imposed on me! how, in such a state of mind can I connect what I write? my distress redoubles on all sides, but I am not yet so callous, or absorbed in my own sorrows, but I could give a tear to our poor Juliana. Your wish to know how we go on at the Vale, brought back the

the reflection, that she has a near ally in grief.

Alas, my dear Lady Harcourt, perhaps at this moment Henry Osborn's doom is joining in the fatal balance; he lies without any apparent sense; by irregular breathings only we are enabled to say he lives. His mother and myself have passed the whole night with him; think what a situation, when every breath might have been the last. The physicians say a few hours must give him life or death; either way I must suffer, but each pang of mine would be alleviated if heaven would restore him to console his afflicted mother; the dreadful spectacle of him whom I once nay still love, struggling for existence, I have not been able to behold without giving way when alone to feelings at once powerful and acute. When before Mrs. Osborn, I endeavour to appear more at ease, but the effort is almost too much for my harrassed frame to support; I have nearly sunk under the heart-rending suspense, scarce easier to be endured than the dreadful certainty.

At this awful moment all resentments are forgotten; I recollect alone that Henry Osborn once loved me, once sacri-



sacrificed every consideration of his own happiness for me, and that probably this illness is owing to some error I have unknowingly committed, or has been wrongly ascribed to me. I am happy Delia does not know the extent of her brother's danger; her presence could not relieve him. Adieu, my friend, perhaps in the morning I may re-assume the pen. I can scarce dare to think or listen, lest every sound should confirm what I dread.

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## L E T T E R LXVII.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

A Few hours have elapsed, but our uncertainty remains, there is scarce a glimmering of hope, and an incident has occurred which plainly shews that some dreadful mystery envelopes me and the unfortunate Osborn.

About an hour ago Mrs. Osborn called to me, Charlotte, said she, I cannot distinctly see what my son has tied with  
much



much care round his arm. I drew near, it was a portrait, which had slipped a little down by the loosening of the ribbon. I was agitated, I confess, and eagerly turned it towards the light; but heavens, what were my sensations at beholding the very picture I lost upon the Dartford-road, and which was originally intended for Mr. Osborn, as the inscription implies. How he got it is incomprehensible, and I mean if he has any interval of sense, to endeavour, through his mother, to learn the circumstance; perhaps it may be a clue to the grand cause of all our evils.

What envious spirit has taken so much pains to shorten that happiness which scarce began to dawn? The only conclusion I can draw is, that the picture has fallen into the hands of some being malicious enough to poison the mind of the too credulous Osborn. But was I fallen so very low, as not to merit even a reproach? Ah, too surely even my harsh reception conveyed not half the contempt his mind was fraught with. But hold, Charlotte, consider that within yon apartment lies the object of thy reproaches, pale, and almost motionless! I considered the  
dread-

dreadful image, and the pen dropped from my fingers. His grave will bury all my resentments, probably my reason also; it was once before on his account shook to its very base, and I feel with certainty, that from the very moment Henry Osborn is no more, the world will cease to be any thing to me. Whilst he exists, delicacy and insulted feelings will aid my just pride, but when he can no longer conciliate or offend, I shall only remember his virtues, and forget every failing. I need not say pity me, your feeling heart can draw a faithful picture of my sufferings. May the avenging hand of heaven inflict as a punishment but half my anguish on those whose malignancy has caused this scene of distress, and we shall be amply avenged. Adieu, my beloved Anna, when recovered from your indisposition, for God's sake come to me, but not on any account before.

C. MARSDEN.

L E T.

## L E T T E R LXVIII.

VISCOUNT MALCOMB TO J. MEREDITH.  
ESQ.

DEAR JACK,

I Hasten to tell you the result of my father's embassy to Sanson-Vale. He admires Miss Marsden, which you may justly suppose, when family pride could so far be forgotten, as for him to condescend in person to solicit her hand for its elder hope. Soon after the first compliments were interchanged between him and Mrs. Osborn, Charlotte appeared, as my father rapturously expresses it, in all her native dignity and sweetness. He introduced the subject of his visit, but she quickly interrupted him, and begged the conversation might be waved for the present, her spirits not being collected enough to listen to any thing that might require so serious an answer. My father whose complaisance for the ladies nothing can exceed, stopped immediately; and after spending a few hours at  
the

the Vale, was conveyed back in solemn state, meditating upon the perfections of this idol of his son's.

I had nearly affronted the old Peer, for I could not help muttering a few curses at the suspense I was still doomed to bear.

He told me quite piqued, such a woman was worth waiting for, and he feared, much better than I deserved. I was obliged to tack about, for the getting his eyes open would not just at present suit me; I shall therefore not hint it before him, but slip away myself to the Vale, and either get hope or a peremptory refusal, as the mine must be sprung while Osborn is unable to prevent it. Things go on worse here, Juliana's spirit, I once thought subdued, seems to support her with additional force; we never now see a tear, no womanish complaints, but a firm though dejected behaviour astonishes and puzzles me, she has lost all female aid, for Delia hearing of her brother's imminent danger, has flown away to the Vale.

Prithee hasten thither, Jack. The mind, they say, when softened by affliction, is in the most susceptible state

state of receiving any impressions we may wish to stamp on it; besides I want a friend in the family to know how they go on.

Ormeston is little at home since his late adventure; we fly round to the neighbouring towns in search of amusement; it sometimes touches my pride to see the contempt with which he treats my sister, but I pass it by, as he is in the main an honest fellow. I could not help laughing at the foolish manner in which he lost his little rustic, though we had like to have had mischief when the grand discovery came out; I suspect that mischievous devil

Lady Harcourt to be the contriver of it. I see nothing extraordinary in that woman, yet she has reformed a rake without degrading the fine gentleman in the least, and I am credibly informed Harcourt has not touched a die since he has been married.

Ormeston I hear intends to contest his father's will, in order if possible to ruin his brother, against whom he is violently enraged on account of some unguarded expressions; I think that but a mean revenge which strikes at the pocket, I would have the woman,  
the



the dear object of contention, or per-  
ish in the attempt. Adieu, Mere-  
dith,

Thine,

MALCOMB.

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## LETTER LXIX.

LADY HARCOURT TO LORD HARCOURT.

Banston Vale.

DEAR EDWARD,

I Have the pleasure to send  
you a more favourable ac-  
count of Mr. Osborn than you had  
yesterday morning any reason to ex-  
pect; he has passed the night more com-  
posed than usual, and the faculty have  
this morning announced some hopes;  
Charlotte's state of mind you beheld; I  
wish I could say she was less agitated,  
but this morning she is worse; here she  
shall not stay, that is determined, if I  
have

have any power. Why will the people worry her so? I am out of all patience. Yesterday whilst we were at tea, the servant came in and said a gentleman wanted miss Marsden; she staid some time, and at length I was sent for. I found the stranger no other than the Viscount.

As I entered, come hither my dear Anna, said she, speak for me, advise me, my spirits are totally exhausted, and I cannot as I ought answer the splendid and reiterated offers of Lord Malcomb. The Viscount then requested my meditation in his favour, protesting the total change his ideas had undergone since he had known and studied the virtues of Miss Marsden; proceed then, said he, turning towards her, with energy, accomplish what you have so well begun, nor reject your convert to virtue.

I answered, for Charlotte could not, and dreading at such a time and in such a place his violence, I neither absolutely discouraged nor yet gave him material hopes, I only intreated he would give up all thoughts for the present, as Miss Marsden could not bear the smallest hurry. The scene of distress, continued I, so continually before her, renders her even unfit for conversation,  
and

and I cannot believe you so devoid of *sensibility* (*I wonder it had not choaked me, Ned*) as not to feel the present situation of a family so dear to her. Charlotte's emotion now encreased to so painful a degree, that she was obliged to leave the room to give way to a violent burst of tears.

I then reasoned with the Viscount on the impropriety of the moment he had chosen, and also that it seemed rather an insult to Mr. Osborn to offer himself to Miss Marsden, directly under his roof. He seemed to acquiesce.

Lady Harcourt, said he, a passion so rooted, so violent as mine, seldom attends to time or place; my knowledge of Miss Marsden's rectitude induces me to place the most unlimited confidence in whatever she says, she has promised to hear me, to deliberate on my proposals; and in one word, has not forbid me to hope. Miss Marsden just then returned: I was sorry that she did, her emotions were too visible, and I dreaded in her eagerness to get rid of Malcomb, she might drop some other unguarded hint which he might construe into encouragement. He sighed, ah, said he, how willingly would I change situati-

ons with the object of such tender concern. I understand your allusion, my Lord, returned Charlotte, with much quickness, the present situation of Mr. Osborn and his friends, I wish not to disguise it, claim my tears, my unfeigned regrets, and should a melancholy, a dreaded event take place, they will be redoubled, but be assured, was Mr. Osborn restored to perfect health, he would become again nothing to me; his mother and sister I shall ever revere and love, but he will claim no place in my remembrance. The Viscount's eyes sparkled with pleasure, then I may hope that my constancy, my assiduous tenderness will one day be rewarded? the feeling heart of Miss Marsden will not be callous alone to me, and ages of expectation will be overpaid if at last she consents to be mine.

Hope nothing, cried she, with an alarming wildness, I have been too despicable in the eyes of one, ever to be thought worthy the esteem of another; I have been thought capable of weakness, a guilt I condemn; and never can this oppressed, this humbled heart admit another thought of love.

She paused, and intreated the Viscount

count to be gone ; he complied after telling her, that every action of her life had contributed to raise her in his esteem, and that he was ready and ever should be to vindicate her conduct before all the world. She bowed her thanks, and he left us.

She fears he will construe what she said in her emotion into encouragement; I do not wish to alarm her, but I am confident he does. However, things must rest as they are at present.

Meredith, having heard of his friend's illness, arrived just after he left us. I can conceive that man is a consummate hypocrite ; I was once allowed to have some skill in physiognomy (*particularly when I chose you*) and I must say that I have taken a most invincible dislike to Meredith ; he has a large portion of self esteem, and I believe in his eyes there is none superior to himself. Delia is his present aim ; he knows Osborn intends her a fortune above the expectations of a younger brother, but presuming no doubt on his own merit, as well as Osborn's friendship, his solicitude about the brother increased in proportion to his hopes of the sister ; his merit induces him to think her as favourable as he could



could wish, and in perfect good-humour with himself, and pleased with his golden prospects, he bows and smiles around with ease and satisfaction.

You will hear from me in a day or two.

Yours affectionately,

A. HARCOURT.

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L E T T E R LXX.

LADY ORMESTON TO LADY HARCOURT.

**M**Y dear Lady Harcourt  
will I am sure favour me with a few lines respecting Mr. Osborn's present state of health, and how all our excellent friends at the Vale are in their present distress. Verbal messages, however punctual they may be delivered, are never so satisfactory as the shortest billet that can be wrote; servants are apt to make mistakes, which  
anxious

anxious friendship cannot put up with the bare probability of; my brother's account is to me mysterious, but I hope all will be brought to a happy issue, and that the present melancholy scenes our friend anticipates, will have no bad effects upon either her health or spirits; the latter we must expect will suffer in some degree. If Mr. and Mrs. Lumley after their Dorsetshire visit, become again your guests, assure them, my dear Lady Harcourt, of my unceasing regard. I am concerned beyond measure at Lord Ormeston's illiberal revenge; I would have endeavoured to have dissuaded or reasoned with him upon it, but alas, too probably so far from preventing his designs or allaying his fury, it might have irritated him even beyond the present vile effects of his rage.

For myself, I have nothing to hope, but all to fear. I see him seldom, but when we do meet, his ill usage and hatred are scarce to be borne. I can weep no longer, the sources of my tears are exhausted, but I feel a painful oppression that seems to prey upon my vitals. Ah my dear friend, too late my erroneous judgment has discovered itself; the retrospect is painful, but it

will

will intrude; had I followed the advice of Miss Marsden I might perhaps in a little time have conciliated the affections of my father, without plunging into this abyss of misery.

But, alas, from my earliest youth I have been alternately the slave of indolence and impetuous passions, never used to check the first impression of the moment by reason or reflection, I was hurried on till too late, by the irresistible and hasty impulse. Thus listening only to the dictates of my own rashness, without even trying to obtain parental favour on any other terms, I flung myself into the arms of a man who *despises* me for this sacrifice to duty. My own feelings are aggravated by those of a once mistaken but still partial father; he sees my distress, and I know his heart inwardly upbraids him with his share in the sacrifice. I always endeavour to wear a smile in his presence; but I still find it hard to dissemble, although I have practised the lesson ever since I have been the wife of Lord Ormeston, but indeed, Lady Harcourt, had I conquered my feelings, I would have disguised every cause of disgust, every painful remembrance, every chagrin should have been buried in my own bosom,

nor ever from my conduct should the world, too prone to malicious constructions, have had a foundation for slander and observation; but it is Lord Ormeston himself that has made the discovery; he has put it out of my power either to palliate or conceal his errors.

The contempt with which he treats me at table is so conspicuous that it requires my utmost exertions to prevent being insulted as well as condemned. Frederic, my only hope, my only consolation, has just quitted us for a few weeks; at his return a grand and final effort must be made, for living thus is scarce existence.

I have reason to think the Viscount, even that cruel brother, remonstrated privately with my Lord yesterday: his pride perhaps has done more than brotherly affection ever could.

Adieu, my dear Lady Harcourt, heaven preserve to you that felicity it denies to

JULIANA ORMESTON.

L E T.

## LETTER LXXI.

LADY HARCOURT TO LORD HARCOURT.

CHARMING, it must be allowed, "Cannot endure the solitude of Harcourt-Castle, and therefore have accompanied Sir George to London to spend a few days with the Lumleys; should you return home, let me know." Ah, Ned, Ned! is there no little rustic in the way? no pursuit after some black-eyed nymph, more lovely than those promised by Mahomet? Heaven knows what may happen while I am making possets and diet drinks. Well, creature, I must trust you, as Juliana often says, the die is cast, and therefore it does not signify rattling my chains now, for the more I struggle the closer will my fetters clasp me, and I suppose I shall be told next, it is the duty of a wife to submit without a murmur. I find difficulty enough to do it to a Harcourt, but I never could to an Ormeston; he deserves not to exist. I am told he has avowed to Juliana the

D 2

having



having kept a woman ever since they have been married in the neighbourhood, and that he threatened to bring her home if Lord Malcomb was not there. Report says that he has even struck her. I only wonder where Campbell is all this time, I feared we should have been alarmed by some dangerous atchievement of his ere this, but some men do love to boast when there is no occasion to display their courage; but I prate on and never tell you, what no doubt you wish, namely, that Mr. Osborn is out of danger, and that Charlotte and myself return in a few days to Harcourt-Castle, but wont stay there, if I am to find it such a desert, therefore if you do not come down immediately, I shall set off for Bath. As for Sir George I know not what degree of punishment he deserves for thus dividing the affections of man and wife, which he certainly is guilty of, for I believe torture itself could hardly oblige Lord Harcourt to say with truth which he preferred, his wife or his friend. I could add something to the Lumleys, for aiding to spirit you away; but you will all swear I write in thorough ill humour,

humour, and I believe I do. The people teize me to death, Charlotte is full of frights and fears, almost ill with fancy; she torments herself that Henry may relapse, then that he will recover and know how anxious she has been about him. In short, she can scarce breathe for apprehension; just perhaps when I am beginning to console her in the best manner I am able, the brat begins to squall in its loudest key, dissipates all my sage maxims, and commands all my attention.

Meredith told me this morning that, after a courtship of a few weeks Barnston is married to the eldest Miss Leyburn. Campbell is doubtless too much taken up with the *amiable pair*, to mind the poor, the almost heart-broken Juliana.

My observations of Meredith when I last wrote, every day confirms, and I am only surprised that Mrs. Osborn and Delia, who neither of them want sense, cannot behold him in the light Charlotte and I do; we inveigh much against him; but they entertain the highest ideas of his friendship, probity, and sincerity. Delia who is tremblingly alive to every sensibility, even to

the extreme, for his acknowledged partiality and his tender solicitude about her brother, we have done what is certainly right among friends, represented him as he appears to us, and we can now only hope our foresight may have deceived us, or if not, be in some degree useful to them it was called into exercise merely to serve.

In short, I am so heartily weary of all around me, I shall be happy to fly from distress, hypocrisy, and credulity, and find myself once more environed by beings who can amuse and love to be amused. Write soon to

Your

ANNA HARCOURT.

L E T.

## L E T T E R LXXII.

SIR GEORGE EDGECOMB TO LADY  
HARCOURT.

ONCE I remember Lady Harcourt did me the honour to say my correspondence would afford her pleasure, provided in the course of it, I would claim the privilege of a friend, and chide freely, or remonstrate whenever I found occasion; shall I presume to add, my first essay, after so envied a permission will be in that strain; yet so it is, my lovely friend.

Lord Harcourt has requested me to write, as he has business that will probably engage him too late to do it himself today, and we mean to dine with you the day after to morrow, at Harcourt-Castle.

I need not say I have seen your last letter, as this is merely designed to comment upon some parts of it, as I know Lady Harcourt too well (at least I hope so) to run any risk of offending her by so doing; but to own a truth, I could not recollect one trace of

Anna in some parts of her last letter—  
Is it kind to fly from distress? are you  
tired of the soul dilating pleasure of endeavouring to alleviate the anguish of the mother, to dry the tears of the sympathizing daughter, and draw forth gently the thorn of anguish from the bosom of friendship? Would Miss Marsden, Lady Harcourt's second self, have said so? would she not or rather has she not nearly sunk under the accumulated distresses she has seen and shared? She has opened her arms to the weeping matron, she has supported the afflicted daughter, she has trod under foot her pride, her wounded feelings, and listened alone to the soft pleadings of humanity; nay, even now, does she not become the gentle monitress of her friends, against the arts of deception? and though at present unsuccessful, yet in the end her persuasive, her mild influence will open their eyes and shew hypocrisy in its true point of view. Imagine not, my dear Lady Harcourt, that I thus elevate Miss Marsden either to humble or depreciate you, far from it, your characters are very similar, and I would only call forth your dormant virtues



virtues that you may be either equalled or outshone.

If it was possible for you ever to be out of humour, I should certainly pronounce you so when you wrote, but I am rather willing to impute it to fatigue, oppression of the spirits, or any other cause.

You are displeased with Campbell for the very reason we commend him. Pardon me, Lady Harcourt, for ever differing so materially from you, but in this instance both reason and prudence obliges me to do it. Of what use to Lady Ormeston would his appearance near her be? Or would it not rather subject her to ten thousand apprehensions, to the censures of the world, the suspicions of her family, and afford a plausible pretext for her husband's ill usage? I think you too reasonable upon reflection, not to subscribe to my opinion, and notwithstanding the liberties I have herein taken, dare hope we shall all meet in harmony.

I could mention another circumstance although it is a trifling one at present, yet if not attended to, may prove the most important concern of your life; but this I shall reserve for our next

D 5

meeting,

meeting, not doubting but your own sense and amiable disposition will improve the hints I have given. In full expectation of pardon for all my offences, I shall present myself at Harcourt-Castle, and hope the fair inhabitant will not dash my presumptuous hopes with a frown. Adieu, my dear Lady Harcourt, and be assured that though you may sometimes find in me a monitor, who may to youth and beauty appear harsh and severe, yet at the same time he is a sincere friend, and reveres your virtues as much as he admires the lively gaiety of your disposition. Once more adieu.

Your devoted

G. EDGECOMB.

L E T-

## LETTER LXXIII.

LADY HARCOURT TO SIR GEORGE  
EDGECOMB.

**O**UT of humour with myself and the whole world, except yourself and friend, I have ordered one of the swiftest horses we have to be got ready, that the servant may at least meet you on your road, for I can never be able to behold either you or Lord Harcourt, till I have fully acknowledged my folly.

I address myself to Sir George, but I do not err in supposing that at the same time I lay open my heart likewise to Lord Harcourt; yes, my friend, I have suffered my foolish gaiety to overpower my reason, to render me peevish and impatient. Often, too often, by infantine trifles have I harraressed Lord Harcourt's spirits, even more almost than his great indulgence could bear. I have trifled with my own happiness, till I have perhaps lost it. Business could not have detained him three days, but I deserve the neglect, and I sensibly feel it. Ah, Sir George, why before  
this

this have you not taken upon you the kind character of a Mentor; surely I should not have neglected the advice of my husband's friend, nor have thought his admonitions presumptuous; I have wept even to anguish at your letter; the hints, though delicate in the extreme, have probed my very soul; I understand but too forcibly the concluding one. Ah, if fetters were never worn with less pleasure than mine have been, we should not behold so many unhappy in the married state; my pen was far from my heart, and I detest myself for ever suffering myself to express any other than its real dictates; no longer treated in the sweet familiar manner your age and friendship authorized, no longer called your Anna, your second Caroline, I feel with forcible regret all I have lost; but I conjure you, I entreat you by the still beloved name of her I have just mentioned, to forget my folly, to cancel for ever the foolish letter I wrote in a moment of fretful chagrin at finding you gone ere I knew of it from Harcourt-Castle, and to meet me once more with the smile of benevolence and approbation.

To Lord Harcourt I ought to say  
more,

more, I owe him more, but I know ye are actuated as if by one soul, and I shall only say, that I shall see him for the first time with a blush of mingled shame and regret; intreat him not to reproach the giddy creature, who has caused him so much pain, for chagrined I am confident he is in a high degree, or he would not have omitted writing on any pretence whatsoever. Tell him if possible, to send me his forgiveness, or the distress I already feel will be augmented.

Miss Marsden's character had you raised it ten times higher, could not in my opinion surpass her real worth. You have drawn a striking contrast between us, but I can own her superiority and take delight in all that can exalt her, though at the expence of my depreciation. Ah, Sir George, fain would I turn my thoughts from the painful subject which oppresses them, but my endeavours are of no avail; it returns with redoubled force, and I am impatient for and yet dread the moment that will bring you hither. My God! that I should ever write thus to my husband! that I should ever dread the sight of my beloved Edward, instead of rejoicing  
at



at it. Foolish, foolish woman! it is thy own work.

Although more than I deserve, I cannot help looking forward with hope, as I think I know that the dispositions of Lord Harcourt and his friend are not formed to reject the truly penitent

ANNA.

## L E T T E R LXXIV.

LORD HARCOURT TO LADY HARCOURT.

**T**HE penitent Anna? say rather the penitent Edward! And have I caused anguish to the woman I adore, has my charming wife shed tears at my severity?

Sir George was to blame, he saw your charming vivacity in an improper light, and did not make sufficient allowance for the common occurrences of life, which might have occasioned the momentary cloud when you wrote that cursed letter which gave me so much pain. Indeed Anna,  
I thought

I thought it unkind that you, my love, should seem to regret those bonds which have indissolubly united us, and which I have ever so highly prized.

But I think of it no more. The flames have devoured the fatal letter, and the ashes are scattered abroad by the winds.

I could not resist sending John back whilst our horses are baying, with these few lines. I know your emotion, and with pleasure assure you my arms will be extended with pleasure to receive you, and that the eyes of Sir George, anticipating your meeting, begin to sparkle with additional lustre  
——He snatches the pen, he will finish :

## SIR GEORGE WRITES.

Yes, I will assure my charming friend, my ever-esteemed Anna, that she never has lost her influence with me; has never ceased to be my second Caroline.—No, my dear madam, at the moment when I took upon me the office of adviser, your feelings could not be greater than mine, and without recollecting to whom, I should not have presumed to have sent such forcible

cible admonitions ; it is, however, very true that Lord Harcourt was excessively picqued, as you concluded. I could moralize a good deal upon the necessity of sometimes humouring us lords of the creation, but it would seem like a triumph, and what belongs alone to Anna, I will therefore reserve my lecture till she affords me some other occasion to call it forth upon her. I must bid you a short adieu, for Lord Harcourt has broke the bell-wire and talked himself hoarse to get the horses ready.

Yours,

J. EDGECOMB.

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L E T T E R LXXV.

MISS MARSDEN TO MISS OSBORN.

**T**HE favourable accounts you continue to send us of your brother's recovery, has given us all unspeakable pleasure. I am happy

py also to find he knows nothing of my having been there; be cautious not to hurry his spirits, yet remember, my dear Delia, mine will be on the torture till you have found out the history of the portrait.

Lord Harcourt and Sir George came here yesterday. Anna for the first time I believe, experienced a little awkwardness, but she has the happy art of so instantly atoning for the errors she commits, that it is impossible to avoid forgiving almost before you are certain of her having offended you. Sir George is a worthy and true friend, and I am certain has her happiness and that of Lord Harcourt much at heart; he has favoured me with a good deal of advice, and I feel much easier from his conversation; he advises me immediately, with the most peremptory politeness, to decline receiving any further applications from the Viscount, but if that fails, as it has hitherto done, I must break through the line of politeness and treat him with less ceremony. As I suppose you will soon see Lady Ormeston, beg she will hint my designs to her father, with all proper acknowledgements for his great

great politeness, and the honour done me by his proposal.

I know she loves me too well not to approve of such a resolution. She can tell by fatal experience, that an apparent reformation is not always to be trusted.

Lord Malcomb must be insensible indeed, if he is not roused to exert a father's prerogative in behalf of his suffering daughter; but I have seen him abandon her when he might have prevented all.

Had I either spirits or inclination to expatiate, I would do it largely in respect to yourself and Mr. Meredith, but I shall barely content myself in saying, that the wish of my heart is, that my Delia's fate may be marked far happier than being joined with his; indeed I have ever thought you repugnant to his addresses. I thought your brother's mind of a far different mould than to take delight in the society or friendship of such a man, but I have been *more than once mistaken*, but I forget I am writing to his sister. Tell Mrs. Osborn the only regret I now have, is the not being able to see her as often as my inclinations would urge  
me



me to. Beg her to let her airing be frequently towards Harcourt-Castle.

We received yesterday a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Barnston, they were accompanied by her mother and eldest sister; (Harriet is with her grandmother,) they came in much form. I fancy Barnston by his countenance draws no very favourable comparisons between his proud shewy wife, and the unaffected elegance of Lady Harcourt. However, I suppose once so severely disappointed, he cared no longer for personal perfections, but determined to console himself with a large fortune in lieu of those perfections he once thought sufficient to sweeten the matrimonial pill. I wish every one happy, but I fear Mr. Barnston will not be amongst the number. Adieu.

Yours,

C. MARSDEN.

L E T.

## LETTER LXXVI.

LADY ORMESTON TO MISS OSBORN.

YOU bade me, my dear friend, at parting, be very minute in writing to you every occurrence as it arrives. I have hitherto wrote but seldom; why should I pain the gentle bosom of friendship with uniform sorrow? But as a ray of hope has shone in upon my cheerful bosom, I hasten to communicate it to Delia, though I must previously inform her of the mortifying cause.

We had the other day a great deal of company invited entirely by Lord Ormeston. I strove to entertain them, and assumed the look of cheerfulness, which displeased Lord Ormeston, why I cannot tell, as he used always to upbraid me with being melancholy. I retired after dinner with the Ladies, and received more company, indeed many whom I was far from expecting; it was very late before the gentlemen from the dining-room joined us. I saw Lord Ormeston was a little flustered, and bore with many insulting reflecti-

ons

ons from him. At last, with one of his contemptuous airs he desired me to lead the way to the ball-room. I looked at him, and felt distressed, for the idea that he wanted a ball had never been suggested to me, and nothing had been prepared for one. Upon his repeating his commands still louder, I was obliged to tell him that I had not heard him mention a ball before, and that it was now much too late to get music and make the necessary arrangements.

Never shall I forget his looks, he muttered some unintelligible curses, and so far forgot himself as to strike me. The blow luckily fell upon my arm, and whilst the company solicitously gathered about me, he called for the carriage, and drove off. Several gentlemen I heard went out to seek him, but he was gone. My father was incensed, and I never heard my brother defend me with so much warmth; stung by the insult he vowed the reparation should be as public as the offence. You may suppose the company kindly dispersed in pity to my distress. My father then warmly urged my quitting the house till a formal separation could be obtained. Here I paused,

paused, inclination and self preservation combated against prudence and honour, but the latter were victorious, and I determined not to quit Lord Ormeston's house by a voluntary act. I would not have hesitated a moment had he ever been the object of my choice, but the world all knew my unfortunate history, and though the candid and liberal may approve my conduct, there are but too many illiberal beings, who will not only traduce, but ascribe it to the vilest motives: an unsubdued partiality for another.

I flatter myself also that Lord Ormeston may relax his persecutions, and that a moment of reflection will represent his errors, and convince him, that if I could not behave towards him with affection, I have at least with propriety. My father was at last convinced that I was right, but would not think of leaving me yet, and determined to expostulate with my husband at his return. The next evening I had retired to my dressing-room, to give vent to tears which would have wrung the heart of my father, if shed in his presence.

The door was flung open, and Lord Ormeston came in whistling with great uncon-

unconcern, and to do him justice, he never looked more handsome or graceful. He advanced, and saw me turn away to hide my emotions. I will own to you that his unexpected presence frightened me so much, and I trembled to that excessive degree, I could scarce sit upon the chair. I suppose he saw it, for after shutting the door, he walked up to the table upon which I leant, and folding his arms, stood for a few moments looking at me in silence, at length he spoke: Lady Ormeston, are you ill? he spoke in an embarrassed tone. I replied, no, but by a look of contempt; and though I played the hero only in looks, Lord Ormeston's subsequent behaviour will shew that mean submission too often on such occasions inspires only contempt. His self love was wounded, and he thought it worth his while to condescend. He pulled a chair close to mine, and in spite of my efforts to hinder him, drew the handkerchief from my eyes. "You are in tears, Lady Ormeston." His voice had something peculiarly kind; you know how very engaging he can make himself. Tell me, continued he, with your usual sincerity, have I any concern in these tears?

Your



Your behaviour, my Lord, last night, surely renders such a question unnecessary. — I paused, I faltered. He took both my hands, you tremble, Juliana, you are afraid of me.

My courage returned a little, and I endeavoured to seem composed; we remained a few moments silent, and without thought or design, I drew off my glove, my bruised arm caught his eye; his concern appeared for the first time real. He exclaimed, Heavens! is that the consequence of my brutal folly?

It is, my Lord, returned I, with some spirit, the reward you thought my fidelity and patience merited. He prevented my continuance, by throwing himself before me on his knees, and covered his face with my gown. Still irritated, I was rising to disengage myself, but the unexpected sight of Lord Ormeston thus before me, pale, unable to speak with emotion, but supplicating forgiveness by his looks and gestures, could I, ought I to have rejected a repentant husband? No, impossible.

I wept, even to distress, and sobbed bitterly upon his shoulder. He said the kindest, the most affectionate things

to

to compose me, and for the first time since our marriage, I felt respect and esteem for Lord Ormeston. His candid acknowledgements of the injustice he had done me, subdued every spark of resentment in my bosom, and I assured him of my perfect forgiveness. After this unexpected reconciliation, I was curious to know what had caused it, and he as openly avowed it was the ill-treatment and extravagance of the woman he had so long been duped by, that after a recent instance of her ill-behaviour, the contest between us struck him so forcibly, that he could not rest till he had seen me, and atoned for his past cruelty.

I shall be but too happy if this alteration of sentiment lasts. My father and brother who knew nothing of Lord Ormeston's return, were surprised to see us come in together in such harmony; we supped, and past grievances seemed entirely forgotten.

Lord Ormeston begged I would accompany him to London; indeed he cannot just yet appear in company here; the recollection of his errors would be too recent. I complied with his request, and he begged I would invite either of our fair friends to be of the

party. I wrote to Charlotte, who kindly consented, and I expect her here every moment to accompany us. I would not propose it to you on your brother's account, though I have no doubt, by taking away Miss Marsden, I incurred the heavy displeasure of Lady Harcourt, but she will soon join us in town, the season being so far advanced.

I have had a letter from Lady Priscilla, who wishes me to receive a visit from her daughter Sophonisba during her residence at Bath. Lord Ormeston was at first unwilling that I should be troubled with his cousin, but as I observed to him how much his aunt seemed to wish it, he begged I would act entirely as I pleased. Lady Mary Morgan will be in town as soon as we shall. I inclose an affectionate letter from her, and also another which gave me momentary uneasiness; keep them both, I would wish to forget the cause.

Your affectionate,

J. ORMESTON.

L E T-

## L E T T E R LXXVII.

[Inclosed in Letter LXXVI.]

LADY M. MORGAN TO LADY ORMESTON.

MY dear niece, I begin writing to you with precipitation, although I yet tremble for you.——Is it possible! has Lord Ormeston so soon forgot the noble sacrifice you made him? has he forgot all that he owes to your exemplary conduct, himself, and his family? He certainly has, or he would not have thus degraded himself in the eyes of the world. I can scarce believe the evidence of those that saw the fact; to strike you, Juliana, must be the effect of sudden phrensy, he could never have looked at you deliberately and been guilty of it; but I shall never acknowledge him for my relation till he atones for his error, and I have heard you have pardoned it.

Indeed, my amiable niece, I have suffered internally for you ever since I had the pleasure of being first introduced to you; the struggles of an oppressed,

preſt, a virtuous mind, were impreſt on your interesting features, and none can feel for others ſo well as thoſe who have themſelves ſuffered ; but as the hard lot you have drawn nothing but death can release you from, let me intreat you to call forth all your virtuous fortitude, and bear up with calm reſolution againſt your oppreſſor. I do not approve of ſeparations, if they can poſſibly be avoided. I will one day convince you that I have felt likewise a great portion of ſorrow, but like you, my love, I derived conſolation from internal rectitude. I have heard lately from Auguſtus Lumley, and find Lord Ormeſton is endeavouring to deprive him of the ſlender patrimony his father left him——can he be ſo unnatural? But, alas, his treatment of you reſolves fully the queſtion. I ſhall try the effects of my perſuaſions to make him abandon ſo great an act of injuſtice. Adieu, my dear niece, believe me with the greateſt ſolicitude,

Yours, &c.

M. MORGAN.

L E T-



## L E T T E R LXXVIII.

MR. CAMPBELL TO LADY ORMESTON.

**D**ARE I presume to intrude the hated name of Campbell once more into the view of Lady Ormeston? Dare I tell her that whilst my heart bleeds with pity for her sufferings, that my soul burns with indignation against the author of them? One word from her would suffice to guide my vengeance.

I have long endeavoured to think of you only as the wife of Lord Ormeston; how vain the idea? Yes I have concealed this fatal passion, I have buried within my own breast every idea that could offend the most rigid virtue. I have avoided your presence, lest some unguarded look or word should endanger your tranquility. Think then my aggravated sorrows at finding you are fallen into the power of a man destitute of common humanity, who has forgot the respect and consideration due to your sex, your beauty, and your rank. Had I met the wretch after I first heard the hor-

rid transaction, I should have exterminated him from the earth, and gloried in the deed. Ah, Lady Ormeston, I can never behold him but in the light of my most inveterate enemy; as the cause that I languish away my days cheerless and sorrowing, by having deprived me of a treasure he himself knows not the value of! But I wander from my present purpose, which is to intreat, that actuated by that humanity inherent to your nature, you will directly inform me of your health and present state of mind.

Perhaps the denial of this trifling honour may deprive me of the little reason I have left, and in a moment of phrensy I may occasion myself ages of repentance. Ah, tell me, beloved Juliana, that you have not sunk under the excess of his brutality; assure me you are well, and I may perhaps linger a little longer. I am, with the greatest respect,

Yours,

C. CAMPBELL.

L E T-

## L E T T E R LXXIX.

LADY ORMESTON TO MR. CAMPBELL.

**T**O what a dilemma has your imprudence reduced me, obliged to err against propriety by answering your letter, to avoid the execution of those menaces with which you seem to threaten Lord Ormeston. To tell you I ever loved him, would be to advance a direct falsehood; but the answer I will give to you, and every one else upon the subject, is, that he is now my husband, and has no right to account to any one but God and my father for his treatment of me. You talk of revenging my wrongs, but wait, Mr. Campbell, till I myself complain. Listen not to the reports of malice, which have, no doubt, exaggerated a little disagreement, in which I was probably much to blame. No one can answer for the moment of passion; expect not that the wife of Lord Ormeston will continue a correspondence which both her duty and inclination condemns as improper. Let me beg you will be satisfied by

my telling you that I am well and happy, and that I further intreat, as the last favour I may ever ask of you, that you will forget ever having seen

JULIANA.

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L E T T E R LXXX.

LORD ORMESTON TO J. MEREDITH, ESQ.

DEAR JACK,

I Have luckily corrected my devilish blunder in time; by the bye, I was really shocked at seeing such visible marks on one of the finest arms in the universe, and believe I was very silly on the occasion, but it has produced the finest effects in the world. Lady Ormeston believes herself secure in my affections, an astonishing proof how quick the sex can change; is in my presence all smiles and complaisance; I sometimes catch her weeping, but it seems to proceed more from habit than any

any present cause. I redoubled my respect for the foolish old peer, talked of his high descent, found myself honoured by his alliance, and have had the art, aided by the Viscount, to persuade him my ill-treatment arose from his daughter's conduct. He paused at first, but a few hints well thrown in about Campbell whom he cordially *hates, because his son does*, settled the business. He is to be silent as long as I am, but if I break the peace, she will not have her father to buoy her up. Was not this a master-stroke? Frederic was yesterday forbid his father's presence because he expostulated too warmly. In short, Jack, we carry all before us, and so we ought, or I am done for; Catherine's extravagance having so reduced me, that if the old fool does not supply me, I must mortgage my Wiltshire estate to support us abroad, and leave my wife to get a maintenance from her relations. This may be called cruel, but inclination is the devil; and Kate has had the art, not only to keep me pretty constant these two years, but at the last, finally to estrange my affection from my wife, whom I now cordially detest, and would willingly be rid of.



No way seems more probable than driving her by repeated ill-usage and absence to furnish me with a plea for obtaining a divorce. You know Miss Marsden is with us, the Viscount you may be well assured is a daily visiter ; he is an adept in dissimulation ; I advise him either to carry her off or drop the pursuit ; there is no woman worth taking so much trouble about, and Juliana and I are melancholy examples of those who marry for mutual spite, which I verily think we did. Malcomb cannot however yet settle his resolution.

I told you in my last, Catherine and I were parted, to all appearance for ever. This was done the better to impose upon Juliana and the world ; but the baggage fearing she shall in reality lose me, has continually wrote the most bitter complaints of my absence, and at last has ventured to hint coming to me. Her project is a bold one, and I have no doubt, with the address she is mistress of, will be well executed. You know whenever she travels with me she is habited *en cavalier*, which disguise becomes her infinitely. She proposes to dress herself thus, and as her face is but little known in town, I can introduce her as  
a young

a young foreigner of distinction whom I knew in Paris, her perfect knowledge of the French tongue will aid the deceit, and we shall often divert ourselves with the polite attentions Lady Ormeston will of course pay to her guest. I have wrote to Kate that she may come, and to-day prepared Juliana, by mentioning the unexpected pleasure I derived from a letter which I produced, and which announced to me the speedy arrival of the Chevalier de Lauzanne. Juliana immediately replied, pray my Lord entreat the stranger to be our guest; I have often heard you mention the civilities of that family, during your stay in France. I caught her words, their politeness was indeed unbounded, and we must not suffer him to go to a hotel. Thus passed the important introduction, and in two days we shall have the Chevalier. His stay will not be very long, for by Heaven I cannot carry my dissimulation much further. I am afraid, Jack, you are playing the fool at the Vale, and neither further your friend's designs or your own. Be a little more brisk in your advances, or even

108 JULIANA ORMESTON: OR,  
even the unsuspecting *gentle* Delia will  
escape your fine-drawn snares.

Thine,

ORMESTON.

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E T T E R LXXXI

J. MEREDITH, ESQ. TO LORD ORMESTON

I Cannot say that my brain is either so fertile in imagination, or that I am quite so bold in execution as your Lordship. Pardon me, if I have the presumption to say, that I think your present projects too bold to end in any thing but disgrace and ruin; for if you were not blindly infatuated, you would be well convinced by the tenour of her conduct, that Lady Ormeston will never give you cause to obtain a divorce; I answer nothing for her inclinations leading her that way, but will answer for it her pride will ever be the bar of your hopes  
in

in that respect; perhaps it is only because she is your wife that you detest her, otherwise I think Lady Ormeston would appear to you a thousand times more attractive than Catherine, whom you vainly imagine adores you. She is not handsome, is uninformed, and does not even keep up that appearance of modesty which is so pleasing in women, although they have forfeited all pretensions to it; and I think in respect to your wild scheme of bringing her into the house, though in itself an excellent joke, yet that it is highly probable she will betray herself in some manner that will degrade and render you contemptible to the world: besides, the old peer may hear of it. And you may depend upon it, that as to affection she has no more for you than she would have for any other, who, like yourself, set no bounds to her extravagancies, nor ever once checked her immoderate love of play. You have certainly maintained her two years, but I think your boasted constancy was a little shaken by the beautiful wood nymph; deprived of her, you fled again to Catherine. But perhaps I remind you of a defeat you would wish to forget. Apropos, I hear  
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you have stopped all proceedings against your brother at Lady Ormeston's request; another refinement in the art of deceiving. But your present affairs ought to engross more of your attention than they really do. As a friend I would advise you to take a small house for Catherine, and settle upon her for the present a moderate limited allowance; for unless you retrench her expences the wealth of the Indies would not supply you both; this done, you may through the mediation of his daughter prevail on Lord Malcomb to advance you a sum necessary for your present exigencies, and get him to discharge part of your mortgages.

I would not advise you to apply to the Viscount, you know in pecuniary matters he is not to be trusted, nor do I think it necessary to let him into the secret of Catherine's disguise. I will not answer to what lengths his foolish passion for Charlotte might carry him, perhaps reveal it all to her.

I have thus truly told you my sentiments. I pity your union with a woman you seem so much to detest; be not unnecessarily harsh with her. I should advise an immediate separation, but that I  
know

know at present you want her to get money from her family, that once obtained, to horse and away, get off abroad, and exist free from the dull constraints of matrimonial shackles.

I fancy myself in a fair way at the Vale. Osborn is more enraptured with me than ever, and more than ever convinced of Charlotte's perfidy. We are on the point of setting out for Newmarket; from thence he talks of a trip to Scotland, and at his return, we hope finally to adjust matters with Miss Osborn. Malcomb must improve well the time of his absence.

Adieu, depend upon my services to the utmost of my abilities.

J MEREDITH.

L E T.

## LETTER LXXXII.

MISS MARSDEN TO LADY HARCOURT.

MY dear Anna must not imagine that amidst the dissipations of London I have forgot her; not but I must confess the charge of laziness brought against me is very justly founded, and must further acknowledge it to be owing to our having entered into the spirit of every diversion London can at this season afford. Lord Ormeston is ever contriving some new dissipation for us, and hitherto behaves to a charm; Juliana before him is cheerful, but in the moments of retirement, past remembrances will occur. She has also observed that her father's revived fondness is much declined, and he often speaks to her with great asperity.

The condition in which I came was, the never being left alone with the Viscount, and she has fulfilled it so punctually, that for this fortnight past he has sought in vain an opportunity of entertaining me with his odious passion. We have

have at present a full house, Lady Mary Morgan is among the guests for a few days only ; the ill state of her health obliges her to fly to Montpellier. I regret it much, as she would have been a mother and adviser to Juliana. We have also Lady Sophonisba, as conceited as ever ; and the Chevalier de Lauzanne, a former friend of Lord Ormeston's : I think I have heard you mention him. The freedom of his conversation and manners are well suited to Lord Ormeston. Lady Sophonisba endeavours by every art she is mistress of to attract the Chevalier's attention, but in vain ; his sole delight seems to be ridiculing her affectation and exposing her folly. He joins but little in general conversation, but his eyes have an elegant, though not respectful language ; I do not think he has been much used to virtuous women. His friend and him are inseparable, and his Lordship never was so much at home. Adieu, he is waiting to conduct me to the carriage ; we are going to the opera.



## INCONTINUATION.

WHY cannot I, like the generality of the world, forget I have feeling? Why not check the sensibility of a heart too soon awakened for its repose? I was last night in unusual spirits, and had dressed myself for the opera with uncommon care, expecting infinite pleasure from the excellent music that evening to be performed.

The opera began; my attention was wholly engrossed by it, and I paid no regard to the fine things the Chevalier on one hand and the Viscount on the other were addressing to me. A deep sigh from the next box excited my attention; I leant forwards, I looked, Anna, I looked, and beheld Henry Osborn with another gentleman. Great God! I cannot describe my sensations, I endeavoured to suppress them, but succeeded not. The Viscount perceiving my change of countenance, exclaimed aloud, that I was ill; this roused Mr. Osborn, he rose and bowed, he seemed endeavouring to hide grief and anguish under the borrowed forms of inattention and contempt.

tempt. The Chevalier spoke to me, I did not hear what he said; oppressed by the sudden rencontre, and the repeated enquiries of all around me to know how I did, my spirits were so seized that I fainted away, and remained so long insensible, that I terrified Juliana exceedingly. Upon my recovering my senses, I found myself in an apartment belonging to the Opera-House, surrounded by many persons, and supported in the arms of Lady Ormeston and Mr. Osborn; I was confused, as you may easily imagine, nor was it less upon hearing the Viscount return thanks to heaven with the utmost energy, for my recovery. I thanked him faintly for his concern. He has expressed a great deal indeed, said Mr. Osborn's friend, (Mr. Elgin I think they call him). I now looked again at the Viscount, and beheld his hair torn, and the greatest marks of disorder visible in his whole person. Mr. Osborn never spoke, but when I thanked him for his assistance he bowed very low to me and all present, and taking the arm of his friend, quitted the room.

I am still unworthy of a word! what a weak creature I am, that I cannot exert

exert more spirit, and retaliate the contempt he entertains for me. The door has this day been thronged with enquiries; all the world does not think me unworthy their notice; Mr. Osborn alone has not deigned to enquire after me. Harriet Leyburn flew to me in the morning, and has staid till just now, using every endeavour to raise my dejected spirits. She tells me Mr. Osborn has been in town three days, it is generally thought to prepare writings for his sister's marriage with Meredith. This has not only caused me surprize but sorrow; I always thought even from childhood, there had been a reciprocal esteem between her and Lord Frederic Malcomb. Indeed Lady Ormeston hinted that he was even now at the Vale. But this world is so replete with mysteries that I have ceased to be surprized.

I was interrupted by a servant who informed me that Mr. Osborn had just called to enquire after me, and had left that letter from his sister. I opened it instantly, but found it was from himself. Far different emotions has it excited in my bosom, justice to myself now obliges me to solicit an explanation

planation pride has before rejected. I will transcribe it for your perusal, while the servant is gone to seek him; I have begged to see him. Lady Ormeston dined out, so I have had no one to consult.

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## L E T T E R LXXXIII.

MR. OSBORN TO MISS MARSDEN.

MADAM,

I Have made use of my sister's name to induce you to read a few lines which might otherwise have been consigned to oblivion unopened. Till last night I had determined never to disturb the calm of your felicity; I beheld you then surrounded with admirers, and blazing in all the triumph of conscious beauty; I sighed at the recollection of those days when the voice of Henry used alone to create a smile, and secretly resolved from that moment ever to avoid you; my resolution was too weak, and thought my senses were but  
too

too well confirmed of the reality of your perfidy, yet I was unequal to the task of quitting a place where I could still behold you, the sight of you was not yet become indifferent to me.

Ah, Charlotte, how painful is the avowal of one's own weakness, yet, for the last time I must tell you, that my passion still makes a part of my existence; I once thought death alone could divide us, but I did not then know the instability of the human heart; I knew not that Charlotte could be so easily dazzled by titled splendour, and so easily forget that she had once gloried in being called Osborn's Charlotte——Why then do you delay give the finishing stroke to second the blow you have already aimed at my peace? Tell your noble conquest that there is one consolation he cannot deprive me of—your picture, Charlotte, that picture intended for him, and which death itself shall alone wrest from me; that cannot deceive me like its false original, and dress its face with artificial truth. But let the happy man beware, she has forgot she once loved me; again she may forget in turn the rival that distracts me.

Ah,



Ah, Charlotte, these are all the effusions of mad despair, but when my imagination, a little calmed, returns again to you, the remains of rage subside, and I see you only as you once was, all lovely, and all perfection. The sight of you last night, renewed every pleasing and every painful remembrance; you did not appear happy, you listened not to the idolatry offered you, with inattentive gaze you sometimes glanced arround, sometimes regarded the stage. I pleased myself with observing every trifling particular, and fancied that remorse embittered your splendid pleasures. Your fainting destroyed every reflection, the whole world vanished from before me; I saw, I thought of but yourself. In the depth of retirement I will cherish the idea that I occasioned the disorder. Adieu, my beloved Charlotte; yes, for the last time I will call you so; for the last time give way to my emotion. Yes, Charlotte, even now it suffuses my heart, it unmans me, the bitter drops fall upon my paper. Once more adieu; *be happy.*

H. OSBORN.

MISS

## MISS MARSDEN IN CONTINUATION.

**M**Y God, Anna! how evidence has wounded me. If he comes, I will be heard. Let him again throw me from him, I will bear it, nor shall the utmost exertion of contempt discourage my proceeding; yet sure at this moment I have nothing to fear, his very soul is softened, and is open to conviction.

How unfortunate I am, more distressed than ever; the servant is just returned, Mr. Osborn had left the hotel an hour, no one could tell his route, but imagined he proposed a long journey, by his preparations: to the continent no doubt.

All my pride is vanished, and I could in my turn submissively sue for pardon. Heaven knows by what specious appearances he may have been misled; the Viscount he evidently alludes to, and I am resolved to quit Lord Ormeston's, and take a small house near you, my beloved Anna; I can then refuse the visits of those I disapprove, without losing the society  
of

of those I esteem. Among the number I shall deny admittance will be the Chevalier, he grows every day more disgusting. Lord Ormeston continually tells him that every modest woman dreads to hear him speak, but it is of no avail. Adieu, my dear Anna.

C. MARSDEN.

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## LETTER LXXXIV.

LADY MARY MORGAN TO LADY ORMESTON.

THREE days ago, my dear niece, we arrived without accidents at Montpelier, and I am willing to flatter myself the journey has been of service to me. Sophia is considerably more fatigued than I am, and complains much of the distance from her charming cousin. I have not yet, my love, forgot my astonishment upon my arrival in London to find so pleasing a change in

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your family, that the continuance of it may ever last, is my sincere wish. I trust your patient, your suffering virtue has at last met with its reward. Lord Ormeston must be truly incorrigible if such a wife cannot reform him. Augustus and his wife will be here shortly, I rejoice much at it, as their society will be peculiarly acceptable; he has been very fortunate in meeting with such a woman.

I understand it is something relative to her family which brings them hither. My advice will be, that if he finds the business either intricate, or her claims disputed, that he shall at once abandon it, and be content with his own fortune, which though not large is nevertheless genteel; especially with a woman, who like Mrs. Lumley, views the world in its proper meridian, and never sighs for grandeur out of her power to attain. I have my apprehensions that the secret, if there is any, rests with Mrs. Wilson; pity she was not more explicit while she could, at least have told the family name. A counsellor of this place has some writings of hers and a small box, but he refuses even to shew them, except to the person they are directed

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ed to, whose name he shrugs, and as to telling it, *il faut l'excusé*. I therefore think they will reap nothing but mortification and disappointment from their long journey. Tell Lady Harcourt I went to Mr. Morley immediately on my arrival; he is in tolerable health and spirits, but laments extremely that his long residence in a hot climate renders his residence in England so precarious. She must absolutely come over before I leave the South, it would be cruel to refuse this uncle who adores her; the tears start in his eyes whilst speaking of her. My God! how can parents be so indifferent to their offspring! He tells me Mr. Morley is married again, and lives in great style upon his appointment.

But methinks I hear my dear Lady Ormeston say, my good aunt talks of every one but herself, where is the promised recital her first letter was to contain? I am this instant going to bespeak your attention to it, and it will evince to you that the pride you so often lament in your family as the source of discord, cruelty, and avarice, as well as of your own unhappiness, is not confined to that alone.

I am, you know, the sister of the



late Lord Ormeston, and one of the three daughters of Baron Lumley; the earldom of Ormeston being conferred upon my late brother when far advanced in years. We lost our mother when I was only sixteen, my father was at first affected by her death, but as a man and philosopher, soon shook off his grief, and placed my eldest sister, Lady Jane, at the head of the family. Lady Priscilla, nearly her age, and actuated by the same sentiments, always accompanied her, and they soon frequented every place of public amusement, and being reputed great fortunes drew after them many admirers.

As to myself, I was never permitted to quit the apartment of my governess unless she took me with her an airing or to church. My cloaths were plainer than those of my sisters servants, and for a week together I never saw them or my father, nor did I much regret it, their heads were so turned with pride, and my father so severe, that I preferred the mild and sensible conversation of Mrs. Davenport, my governess, to all their high flown disputes about dress and admiration. But my tranquillity was of short duration, Mrs. Davenport died

two

two years after my mother, and left me in great distress. I was not prepared to lose her, she had formed me for the world, but not such a world as my sisters loved to shine in. My disposition, more serious than theirs, coveted alone domestic enjoyments, and I was far from displeased, though unconscious of the reason, that they never invited me to join their engagements abroad nor appear in their parties at home. I really believe they represented me to my father either as an idiot, or the most ignorant of human beings, for when I did see him, he always avoided any conversation with me, and I was too much awed by his severity to press it. Things were thus, my dear niece, when one evening knowing my sisters were as usual out, I went to my father's study to fetch a book, and being so much alone I was often dull, and found in them the greatest relief. I was surprised upon opening the door, to see my father at so unusual an hour in a very great dishabille writing. I would have retired, but having seen me, he demanded in his usual harsh tone, what I wanted. I told him He said, come in let me see what book you take. I put a volume of Hume's moral essays into

his hands. You have surely made a mistake, child, said he, you did not mean to take this. Pardon me, Sir, I replied with great timidity, I have read them often with great pleasure. He looked at me earnestly, and laying down his pen, sit down, Mary, said he, with rather an encouraging smile, I fear I have left a diamond among the rubbish. He then asked me several questions upon my studies and improvements in so much milder a tone than usual, that I was thereby so far emboldened, that I answered to his infinite satisfaction. Mary, said he, rising and embracing me, I fear I have discovered your merits too late to do them ample justice, but we will be in future friends; your sisters are not fit companions for you, but you shall henceforth be mine; from this time I treat you no longer as a silly child, but social friend.

Penetrated with filial love, duty, gratitude, and every pleasing enthusiastic sensation a youthful mind is capable of, I threw myself upon my knees before him, and we both shed tears. My father declared he had never experienced so delightful a moment since the death of my dear mother.

ther. From that day he loved my company, and preferred it to any other. He told me in confidence he was miserable at the injustice he had done me, for to support the extravagance of his son and my two elder sisters, he had so far impoverished his estates that unless he lived many years he could not give me a fortune equal to theirs; this always preyed upon his spirits, although I made very light of it. Observe, my dear niece, all this while I continued my retired way of life, and knew nothing of dress or public amusements. One evening, however, Lady Priscilla was taken ill, which was the more serious mortification to Lady Jane as she had promised to be at the new opera, and she knew her father's high sense of punctilio to be such, that he would never have forgiven her going alone. My brother was out of town, too late to send to any female acquaintance, the only recourse was to take me. She asked permission of my father; he left me to do as I pleased. I hesitated, but as my sister condescended to intreat me, and I will not blush to own that the curiosity natural to so young a person, secluded too as I had been, seconding her intreaties, I yielded,

ed, provided she would take the trouble of adorning me. Her eyes sparkled with joy, and she assured me she would send her servant with every thing proper, adding with a smile, you need not be much dressed.

Behold me then, for the first time in my life, under the hands of the hair-dresser. I was forced to submit quietly to the loss of some of my fine auburn ringlets, which I certainly prized; but I was obstinate not to admit of powder. A crape petticoat and silver gauze dress, looped round the waist with velvet was my habit; upon my head I had no ornament. I fancied myself quite in full dress, but upon entering the drawing-room and beholding Lady Jane, I found my mistake; she being loaded with every appendage of elegance and fashion. I looked confused, but it was more for the fear of appearing ridiculous in the eyes of the world, than from any resentment I bore her. My father was present; he saw my confusion, and frowning at her said, this was not well done, Jane; but fear not, my dear Mary, continued he, pressing my hands, your artless innocence and natural elegance will inspire more real admiration than



than all the studied arts of fashionable dress and manners. I blushed, and my sister bit her lips at this unexpected compliment; but it was from my father, and the homage of a prince could not have afforded me such real pleasure. Imagine us then at the opera, surrounded by splendors I had till then no idea of; every instant I was confused by hearing my own praises, and loud enquiries of who I was? Those gentlemen who knew my sister crowded round us, and solicited my conversation with so much eagerness, that she could not conceal her vexation, but strove by every little mean art in her power to depreciate me, and I observed never dropped the smallest hint of my being her sister. After the opera, which I knew nothing of, owing to the noise around us, we joined her fashionable friends in the coffee-room, and amidst the crowd I was happy to find my father. The Duke of B. who had particularly followed us, no sooner saw him speak to me, than he drew himself on one side, and whispered something, to which my father made no other reply than leading his Grace towards me and saying, I have the honour of introducing to your Grace my

youngest daughter, Lady Mary Lumley. A buzz instantly ran through the croud, my father perceived it, and turning to my sister, Jane, said he, how happens it that you have failed of introducing your sister properly to our friends? This public reproof filled her with confusion, which was increased by Lord Lumley presenting me as his daughter to every creature in the room he knew. At our return home he reprimanded her severely for her behaviour towards me, and a quarrel ensued; the consequence of which was, that my father on issuing cards for a great dinner, told her that if Priscilla and herself did not intend to treat me as a sister, he would dispense with their company on the occasion. They stifled their animosity and behaved tolerably well.

My father now centered all his pride in seeing me admired, and my vanity was soon flattered by very advantageous offers. The Duke of B. was the most favoured by my father. He was young, handsome, and rich; but rather too fond of the pleasures of the gay world to please me. My sisters were extremely mortified at this important conquest  
of

of mine, and carried their ill-nature as far as possible.

I was one evening at the play with a friend of my deceased mother's, who introduced to me the most accomplished man I had yet seen, in the person of Colonel Morgan. The Duke, who was my constant attendant, beheld with pain his assiduities, and so little displeasing were they to me, that though I accepted the hand of the Duke in quitting the box, yet I could not help casting a look behind at Mr. Morgan. Sanctioned by the friend before mentioned, he soon visited us, and made proposals to my father, in point of fortune almost as advantageous as those of the Duke de B. In short, he left me entirely at liberty to follow the dictates of my own heart, which soon determined in favour of Colonel Morgan, to the infinite surprise of my sisters, who beheld with contempt every rank beneath that of a Baronet, and from that instant their dislike was increased by the contemptible opinion they entertained of my spirit and understanding. My husband made ample amends for their deficiency in natural affection, by his unwearied assiduities. My father did not live long after my  
mar-

marriage; I paid a tribute of unfeigned grief to his memory; my sisters were unnatural enough to dispute his will, wishing to deprive me of the fortune he had left me. It was thrown into chancery, and Mr. Morgan did not live to see it decided; but though disappointed of my promised fortune, it never abated in the least his affection.

After his death, my sisters made some advances towards a reconciliation, and some friends undertaking the office of mediators, I was induced for Sophia's sake to admit their pleas and excuses; in consequence they withdrew their suit, and I was put in possession of what the law had left me. Soon after Lady Jane married the youngest son of the Earl of Thane. Never was a couple worse matched; they parted three years after marriage, and my unfortunate brother and himself, who were inseparable, alike generous and alike dissipated, in a few years fell victims to their own irregularities. My sisters and myself are now apparent friends, but sincerity is far from their professions.

I am sorry to find you have Lady Sophonisba for an inmate; her disposition has early received so wrong a bias,

bias, that I fear she may occasion you  
 some uneasiness, as I know her to be  
 an arrant flirt, and if I err not, pos-  
 sessed of a vast deal of art and low  
 cunning, which her mother miscalls  
 wit; guard against her, my dear niece,  
 nor suffer your own good and unsus-  
 pecting disposition to be duped by a  
 girl who detests every woman she is  
 forced to confess superior any ways to  
 herself; and I assure you, so exalted  
 an opinion has she of her own merits,  
 that there are very few whom she  
 yields to in her own conceit. I know  
 no folly more detestable in a woman  
 than this; what signifies priding them-  
 selves upon the more superficial ad-  
 vantages of person, dress or birth?  
 The former is liable to fade, the latter  
 to be overlooked, if contrasted with  
 those more splendid; it is the mind  
 alone they ought to cultivate with the  
 greatest care; but I am sorry, very sor-  
 ry to say, there are very few of our  
 sex that think its beauties either pleas-  
 ing or necessary. Pray talk to Sopho-  
 nisba, my dear, but I fear her prejudi-  
 ces are too strongly imbibed for either  
 your good example or advice to era-  
 dicate them; however your merit will  
 be always the same, though you should  
 not



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not succeed. Adieu, my dear Juliana, present to Miss Marsden and your Lord the affectionate compliments of

M. MORGAN.

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L E T T E R LXXXV.

LORD ORMESTON TO J. MEREDITH, ESQ.

JACK,

I Must get you to take care of my Newmarket business, for I have run my bets so devilish high in London, that I cannot quit the place till it is decided; if that cursed mare does not win I am ruined for ever. I got ten thousand out of the old peer yesterday after a *pathetic* lamentation of my *wife's* extravagancies, and by heavens! Kate and I have staked that and double the sum. I tremble sometimes that the jade will over-act her part, but her consummate impudence carries her through. She makes love with inimitable grace, and gallants Miss Marsden every

every where. The Viscount's impatience diverts us beyond measure, he behaves like a madman at the attention paid to his charmer, and they had nearly scuffled last night. I was obliged to interpose for fear of a discovery; Juliana and Charlotte were frightened, and I thought I must have let him a little into the secret by way of preserving peace; but he is set off this morning for Newmarket, and by this time thinks no more of it. Keep a courier always ready to bring me the first intelligence. I allow three days, and then welcome fortune, or adieu, England.

I fear Newland is in deep, have a touch with him, Jack, and ease him of a little of his uneasy riches; but hang the coxcomb, I have more reason to think of myself, and it is rather a serious business when a man's whole fortune hangs upon the event of a moment. I have arranged matters thus in case of the worst.

There is a fellow who has often advanced me money, and will now give me five thousand down, at a moment's notice, for the furniture of my town and country houses; the houses themselves are mortgaged over the very chimnies. With this sum, Kate and I shall be off, our  
interests

136 JULIANA ORMESTON : OR,

interests are reciprocal, as well as our inclinations. Lady Ormeston has too many friends to want a home, I shall therefore give myself no concern about her. Adieu, I expect your express *avec la dernière impatience.*

Thine,

ORMESTON.

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L E T T E R LXXXVI.

LADY HARCOURT TO MISS OSBORN.

WELL, here am I, my dear little rustic, in the midst of dust, confusion, and noise; enveloped twice a day in clouds of fragrant dust, and perhaps twice as oft in those less ambrosial. My brains are absolutely deranged by it, and I feel the want of pure respiration, as it is to be found in the shades of Harcourt-Castle. Heavens, what have I said! Shades of Harcourt-Castle! read it not, you belles of the fashionable hemisphere

phere, lest the idea overwhelm ye, or what is worse lest ye shun me in dread of the contagious influence of my romantic star.

Charlotte has taken one of the most elegant little tenements you ever saw, and is fitting it up simply beautiful. I have no time to assist her, having enough to do with kissing the boy, talking with my milliner and dispatching cards of compliments and thanksgiving upon our arrival; but my Lord makes ample amends for my deficiency, he is continually with her ordering one thing, contriving another, and often marring all. I called yesterday morning, and attracted by a beautiful painting in the anti-chamber, overheard them in deep arguments thus: Miss Marsden, I think the elegant sofa just come must be placed here, it will give the room a better finish, and these lustres thus. Pardon me, my Lord, it seems to me that one of them will be better placed here, and have a more striking appearance. Scarce had she pronounced the word *striking*, ere Lord Harcourt, impatient to reply, by an unlucky jerk of his elbow overset one of the subjects of contention, which firewred the floor with its brilliant ruins. I entered, in a violent fit of laughter, and my Lord, notwithstanding this misfortune,

tune,

tune, could not help joining me. I had yesterday the Ormeston family to dinner. Apropos, Charlotte has discarded the Viscount, and he is gone off in a huff to Newmarket.

The rest of the family came, they brought with them the Chevalier de Lauzanne, we have heard so much about. I knew one of the name in Paris, but very different to this in every respect, being one of the most accomplished noblemen in France; and never hearing of two of the name, a thought struck me, which the occurrences of the day confirmed. You know my heart is ever on my lips, which was the case at that moment; I could not rest till I had turned the conversation upon Paris. I thought the Chevalier seemed extremely ignorant of that capital, and spoke of several people I knew there very much at random. I took occasion to ask him if he knew a young nobleman a great favourite of mine, of his own name. The poor devil was stunned; he coloured, stammered, and with much hesitation said, no; he must be of another family, which I am firmly convinced he is. This is some sharper, who has taken the title to procure easy admittance to the gaming-table. Lord Ormeston



Ormeston doubtless finds him necessary, and therefore connives at the imposture; they are inseparable and presuming upon the credit of his title, for he has nothing else to recommend him, he persecutes every creature with his odious nonsense. Poor Juliana, she is obliged to suffer this wretch under her roof, whose conversation is really an offence against all decency. 'Tis well he is not the friend of Lord Harcourt, or rather that I am not the wife of Lord Ormeston, for I should certainly try to turn him out of doors. We had also the haughty Lady Sophonisba, who most charitably despises us all, nor are we much behind hand with her Ladyship. After dinner we formed into a party for Ranelagh, at which place we arrived about eleven. What hours! exclaims the dear sober inhabitant of Sanson-Vale.

The rotundo was by no means full, and we sat down literally to wait for the croud, which did not assemble till after twelve, at which time Lord Ormeston, who had strayed away joined us hanging indolently one arm upon the Chevalier, - the other upon Mr. Barnston, by the side of whom marched the

woe-

woe-begone Campbell. Lady Ormeston changed colour, but recovering herself, began some trifling conversation with me. Lord Ormeston, however, spoilt all, he introduced Mr. Barnston as an old school-fellow, and then presenting Mr. Campbell, this gentleman I presume, said he, wants no other introduction than own merit, and his being Mr. Barnston's friend and mine. We were all struck with surprise; I jogged Lord Harcourt, for his mouth was actually half open. Campbell, though thus purposely introduced, did not join us without evident embarrassment, which Lord Ormeston used every polite effort to dispel. What an inconsiderate being he is! Poor Juliana how distressed she looked, but the coquettish vanity of Lady Sophonisba a little relieved her; she marked Campbell as a conquest worth trying for, and displayed all her little arts. Presumptuous mortal! to imagine that heart capable of doing homage to thy perfections which had been so long occupied by the lovely Juliana, and which, if eyes are faithful interpreters of its motions, is yet intirely her's; but Lady Sophonisba's advances could not be totally neglected by a man  
of

of gallantry, and happy at any excuse to be near Lady Ormeston, he attached himself to her for the rest of the evening. We made a few rounds when Lady Ormeston whispered me to propose going. I did, but her perplexities did not end here. I begged Lord Ormeston would enquire for the carriages; we had before agreed to sup with them. His Lordship soon returned, they are ready said he, and I believe we have room for our two friends without any inconvenience to you ladies, (we were at a small distance) you have not surely invited Mr. Campbell, replied Juliana; consider the world; propriety my Lord—demands no sacrifice against reason, interrupted he, I have invited him not only to-night, but to visit us very often; and, added he, very gallantly taking her hand, I have too high an opinion of Lady Ormeston to fear introducing any person however highly favoured, to her intimacy. Our company advanced, and as I saw her eyes swimming with tears, I interrupted him in my turn. For Heaven's sake, my Lord, recollect where you are! you will certainly become the subject of half the circles in town by to-morrow night.

O mon-

O monstrous a man seen in public taking hold of his wife's hand ! he had better be seen making love to his grandmother. For that saucy speech, cried Lord Harcourt, I positively hand you to the carriage myself ; aye and he did too, in spite of all the resistance I could possibly make. I shall not be able to shew my head in public again till something equally ridiculous, but more novel, engrosses the attention of the fashionists of the day. Well, at length we got to Lord Ormeston's, our supper was far from a lively one, though she was every thing that could be wished. We have received cards from Mrs. Barnston for to-morrow, I have with some difficulty prevailed upon Lady Ormeston to go. I promise myself some diversion.

Yours,

A. HARCOURT.

## LADY HARCOURT IN CONTINUATION.

**S**UCH a visit heaven defend me from repeating. We went at eight, as the cards particularly mentioned; we found a vast number of people, some known, some unknown, and Mrs. Barnston in a studied dishabille, a large cap, and seemingly scarce able to sustain the fatigues of conversation; I really pitied her, till Harriet Leyburn undeceived me, upon my saying I thought Mrs. Barnston would do well to apologize to her company, and leaving them to the care of her mother and sister, retire. Between ourselves, Lady Harcourt, said the charming girl, it is all affectation, I never heard her so loud as a little time ago, but the affair is, she yesterday ordered a cap the most outre you can possibly imagine; the milliner presumed to have taste, and reduced it to a proper medium; the sight of it so different from what she wished, threw Mrs. Barnston into such



such a rage, that hysterics succeeded, and afterwards she determined not to dress at all. In short, you cannot think to what lengths she has carried capricious folly of every kind, since she has been married.

I could not help reflecting, Delia, what trifling beings the generality of our sex must appear in the eyes of the men, and more reasonable part of the female world. I am actually ashamed of it, and will never if I can help it, play the fool again; that the disappointment of a silly cap should put a woman out of humour with herself, and render her burdensome to all around her. I declare to you Mrs. Farnston could not have looked more dejected had she lost her father or mother.

The chain of my meditations was broken by the arrival of many fresh visitors; I fixed myself however, pleasantly enough between Miss H. Leyburn and Mr. Campbell, whom Lady Sophonisba endeavoured but in vain to draw unto her; she took such little pains to conceal her mortification, that I overheard many ill-natured reflections on the intolerable forwardness of married women, who thought they were privileged to coquet with any  
man

man they saw. This is perhaps an article in her Ladyship's creed. I however, careless of her anger, had entered into a very pleasing and rational conversation with Campbell, when our ears were assailed by a bustle in the antichamber, forthwith, in all the style of Newmarket elegance, Lord Newland entered the drawing-room; he scuffled, and pushed through the shining crowd, to their no small diversion, till he reached me, quite out of breath.

Just arrived from Newmarket, my Lady, fine sport there, I've lost three thousand, but shall fetch it all back, with plentiful interest. Then surveying himself, and grinning—a little en dishabille, to be sure, but rather than not come at all I made free; eh, my Lady, we people of fashion are above form.

Lord Newland, replied I very gravely, must be welcome in any dress; but permit me to remind your Lordship of not yet having paid your respects to Mrs. Barnston. True, by Heavens, replied he, *quelle manque de politesse*, but you are the cause; when I see those eyes, I forget all the world else; and the wretch affected to sigh.

Luckily Lord Ormeston relieved me, by calling the monster away. Mr. Barnston did not appear the whole evening. Campbell told us he was out of town, but I rather think he was too much hurt at his wife's absurd behaviour to witness it in public. Our supper was costly, but arranged in the most whimsical manner possible. Only a select party staid, and by the help of a little flattery from the Chevalier, and a few compliments from Sir William Leslie, Mrs. Barnston became a little more cheerful. You do not know Sir William, nor do I any further than meeting him at different places. He is a baronet, of three-and-twenty; lively and dissipated; a passionate admirer of the ladies, his studies are limited to pleasing them; and fame belies him if he has not more than once been crowned with success. As to Lord Ormeston, his conduct becomes every day more sad, more inexplicable; he has certainly some design in cultivating so assiduously an intimacy with Campbell; by his good will he never would be absent from the house, and Campbell has not fortitude enough to resist the temptation of seeing Lady Ormeston.

meiston. The world forms various conjectures; some say he wants the aid of Campbell's purse; others, that he wants to get rid of his wife.

I entirely acquit Campbell from the bottom of my heart, of any knowledge of such schemes, but from Lord Ormeston's known profligacy, I cannot help suspecting all he says or does. Lord Malcomb is gone to Scotland, seemingly out of humour with his daughter, for what I know not, nor does she.

I was just going to describe a court dress to you, but Lord Harcourt is grumbling at my elbow, and has been scolding by fits all the time I have been writing; he is sure I shall be ill with racketing so much, and taking so little rest; so to please the man, the like of whom I believe there are but few, I must bid my dear Delia good night, or rather good morning, for it is past four.

A. HARCOURT.

P. S. Sir George Edgecomb has been gone some days to Montpelier.

## L E T T E R LXXXVII.

LORD ORMESTON TO J. MEREDITH, ESQ.

**P**ERDITION take the mare,  
 she has played me false!  
 Pistol her for me directly, and the  
 fellow who rode her. I am distracted,  
 I must be off directly, for to-morrow  
 morning, perhaps this night, if they  
 hear of it, my house will be seized,  
 and I want no explanations. Catherine  
 accompanies me, and you may direct  
 for Sir Henry Lambert, poste  
 restante Lyons. I have arranged every  
 thing, and the devil take the residue.  
 Prithee let me have no more prefaces  
 of "I am truly sorry." Damn pity,  
 it is a poor groveling thought, fit only  
 for those tame spirits, who sink  
 under their losses; I soar above them,  
 and despise the compassion of those  
 who must execrate the folly that drew  
 it forth. Speak no more of my wife, I  
 have been long tired of her, she is  
 too good for me, and for that reason  
 I detest her. I have placed  
 Campbell



Campbell upon a familiar footing in the family, and he is a fool if he does not improve the advantage my absence, and her consequent embarrassments, will afford him. Write me all the occurrences that pass; Kate is impatient to be off, that she may enjoy the title of Lady Lambert.

Yours,

ORMESTON.

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## LETTER LXXXVIII.

MISS MARSDEN TO MISS OSBORN.

I Think it generally falls to my province, my dear Delia, to convey bad news, and relate the misfortunes of my friends. I have just completed my little abode in time to receive into it the most unfortunate of women: but I will tell you all.

Three nights ago Lady Ormeston gave one of her private concerts, which have been so generally admired in the fashionable world; the company was select, but as usual very elegant; royal smiles graced the evening, and every one seemed happy. The concert finished at eleven, and there remained only Lady Harcourt, Lord and Lady Ormeston, Lady Sophonisba, Campbell, the Chevalier, and myself, to supper; Lord Harcourt was otherwise engaged. Lord Ormeston was over cheerful, that is he seemed endeavouring to shake off some uneasy thoughts and  
bury

bury them in apparent mirth and felicity.

I heard it whispered in the course of the evening, that he had lost great sums at Newmarket, but there was no appearance of it in his manner. In the middle of supper a servant whispered him. Let them wait, said he aloud, and looked disturbed. It is late, my Lord, said Lady Ormeston, who is it waits? Only my post-chaise, my dear, returned he, with a smile. She observed his altered looks, and became extremely agitated; my God! Lord Ormeston, what is the matter? has any thing disagreeable happened?

I hope my conduct, Lady Ormeston, replied he, with a gathering frown, will soon require no explanation; it is certainly very indifferent to you what becomes of me. She looked at us all, and we upon one another in great consternation, the Chevalier alone appeared undisturbed.

The servant returned, my Lord, there is a man who wishes to see you before you set off. I must be quick then cried he, my friends will excuse me, and Lady Ormeston will be so kind as to send my cousin Sophonisba

back to her mother. Adieu, my friends.

We all rose to stop him, except Juliana, who sat as if all-accumulated woe had fallen upon her head. The brute not content with the misery he had brought upon her, added insult, by turning to the pretended Chevalier, and crying, come, Catherine, are you ready? which was answered by a horse laugh from the wretch who had been so long caressed by the unsuspecting Juliana. Was there ever such refined cruelty, as to bring a common wanton under her roof to strike the wound deeper to her keen sensibility! The disguise had been well supported. But I digress, excuse me.

This new discovery was like a clap of thunder to the miserable Juliana; she fell senseless to the ground. Campbell, whose angry gestures menaced Lord Ormeston, was now occupied solely by her. We raised her, whilst Lady Harcourt, whose feelings are quickly alarmed, believing her really dead, exclaimed in a tone of piercing anguish, Monster! behold, you have now completed the work her unnatural brother and weak father had before

fore began; she is now beyond all your ill-treatment.

A momentary gleam of remorse spread round his heart; confused and agitated, he broke from the creature, who would have restrained him, and knelt by the pale senseless victim of his barbarity, and with clinched hands and wild looks dared raise his eyes even towards that heaven whose laws he had just so flagrantly violated. In about ten minutes a deep sigh gave the first notice of her being still alive; he started up, he pressed her hand, and raised it to his lips, she lives! cried he; the crime of having killed her is spared me. He took Campbell's unwilling hand, and Lady Harcourt's, and joining them together, to you I leave her, said he, in a tremulous voice, England is no longer my country, adieu for ever; and he rushed out of the room, followed by the creature, who has doubtless ruined his fortune, and estranged the small remains of affection from the miserable victim of his pride and avarice.

We were still employed in recovering Lady Ormeston, when three ill-looking men entered the room. Mr. Campbell enraged at their intru-



sion, demanded roughly what was their business; but imagine the additional shock, when they told us as civilly as they could, that they were employed to seize the house and furniture, in the name of a person who had advanced my Lord money upon it.

Juliana never shed a tear, but listened whilst they spoke. Come, my dear Charlotte, said the poor mourner, you will not forsake me, we will go to Ormeston House, let a carriage be got ready——but perhaps——she looked confused, and stopped. The men, harsh and savage as they generally are, were melted by her distress, and one of them taking Campbell on one side, told him to prevent the lady, for people were then gone to Ormeston-House; that the carriages were included, and nothing remained for the poor lady but her clothes.

She overheard the last words, and starting from her seat, my God! said she, have I no longer a roof to shelter my miserable head? and she sunk upon my shoulder in an agony; but a flood of tears gushing forth, gave her abundant relief. We all reiterated our offers of friendship, and I insisted upon her immediately quitting a house,  
in

in which she had never experienced any thing but insults and mortifications.

Campbell seemed to sink the passionate lover entirely in the disinterested friend, he accompanied us to my house, and from thence went to Lord Harcourt, not chusing to interfere himself in any thing concerning the Ormeston's. Lord Harcourt, pursuant to his request, has made some enquiries, and has found all our fears realized; there is actually nothing left, for her very jointure is mortgaged during the life of her vile husband. Lord Harcourt has wrote to Scotland to her father, and Lady Sophonisba is gone to Lady Harcourt's.

This is the present situation of your friends; you will readily allow it not to be enviable. The Viscount, debarred from prosecuting his odious suit, no longer dissembles, his vices seem to have gained fresh force, by being some time veiled by his consummate art. He has not taken the least notice of his unfortunate sister since he came to town, though Lord Harcourt wrote also to him on Lord Ormeston's flight, nor ever whilst I live shall his suffering  
sister

sister implore aid or assistance from him.

Mr. Meredith has been here, he avows having heard from Lord Ormeston previous to his departure, but solemnly protests his ignorance of the place whither he is fled to. It is odd, but I cannot credit the protestations, and I believe should scarcely the oath of that man; I think him too much like the Viscount and his brother-in-law to deserve credit. I always speak what my heart dictates, my Delia, be not offended that I thus criticise the friend of your family. God forbid that I should ever behold him the husband of my Delia; I do not think her death would give me more poignant sorrow. I could reconcile myself to the latter by listening to the voice of reason, which would habitually repeat, 'Thy friend is happy in immortality;' but in beholding her the wife of such a character, I should have the affliction of knowing her misery was fixed through life; for even allowing a woman survives an unworthy husband, the period of declining years is not the season to regain that animation and flow of spirits which affliction and misfor-

misfortune have long since laid their iron weights upon.

I have experienced, though from other sources, their baleful influence. The loss of my revered Mrs. Dormer, first implanted melancholy in my bosom, which from its frequent renewals, I believe will never now be wholly eradicated.

I will not attempt to deceive myself by saying I no longer think of your brother, far from it, I still cherish his remembrance, and his unkindness and injustice rankles deep in my bosom; a few years will probably convince him that Charlotte was incapable either of change or deception; till that period, let friendship fill every vacancy of my breast, and surely never was a greater instance required than the one Juliana affords me; it shall be my only care to soothe and console her. At present she is insensible to every thing; she was bled this morning, which has a little relieved her from the excessive stupor she was plunged in; but she cannot yet bear the most trifling conversation.

And will you, my dear Delia, or rather will your revered mother condescend to become my guest, for I dare  
not

not infringe Lady Harcourt's rights respecting yourself, but Mrs. Osborn has promised to come to me. Hasten then, my dear friends, why wait farther invitation from one whose attachment you so well know? true friendship disdains unnecessary form and vain parade. I shall expect a personal answer, and no other; suffer me not to be disappointed, but let me at the end of the week embrace my friends. Lord Harcourt will meet you twenty miles from London in his carriage, Friday morning, you will not permit him to return alone.

Lady Harcourt is this moment gone, she threatens an immediate siege of the Vale if you disappoint us. She is extremely disgusted at Sophonisba, and most heartily wishes her any where but with her. I cannot bear that girl, she knew that we wished out of delicacy to Lady Ormeston, to keep the affair of the pretended Chevalier a secret, which might easily have been done, as so few were present at the discovery, yet this malicious chit has told it as a monstrous good story to every creature that would listen to her, and it has afforded ample scope to the wits and the satirists. Lord Harcourt was



so provoked, that he was obliged to muster all his politeness and natural equanimity of temper, to hinder his instantly packing her off to her mother; but for propriety's sake they must bear with her a little longer. Adieu, my amiable friend, hasten soon to your affectionate and expecting

C. MARSDEN.

## L E T T E R LXXXIX.

SIR GEORGE EDGECOMB TO LORD  
HARCOURT.

PARTAKE, my dear Ned, the first real joy I have experienced for twenty-three years; it is, indeed, pure and unalloyed. I have found a daughter, an unexpected gift of bounteous Providence. I have found her replete with all the sensibility of her angel mother; with all her enchanting softness of manners, and that winning energy of expression which shews at once the goodness of her heart, and the sweetness of her disposition; and it is partly to you, my dear Ned, that I owe this supreme happiness. You stretched out the arm of protection to oppressed innocence, and your Anna crowned the work by receiving the unknown and hapless Matilda with confidence and tender friendship. Yet, it is her, the same distressed and beautiful form, whom from the first moment of beholding, I felt interested for; it was the voice surely of nature which pleaded for her.

You

You remember the evening we spent last together, I received a letter, and quitted you abruptly. Lady Harcourt was not well pleased, she thought I had received bad news, and would not share my sorrows with you. Heaven has ordained me joy when my grief-worn soul least hoped to receive such happiness; had it been otherwise, far should it have been from me to disturb the peaceful calm of your bosom by my griefs.

But to return to the letter, it was perfectly an enigmatical one, and was briefly that some papers had been intrusted by the deceased Madame St. Rue to an Advocate, at Montpelier, which materially concerned me; that they had been recently demanded, but would be given up alone to me. The most trifling circumstance relative to a woman I had so long sought, was interesting, and I could not have rested another night in town I think, had the universe been my recompence. I would not communicate the cause of my hasty journey to you, fearing you would either feed or totally destroy the pleasing romantic ideas I have formed, which upon maturely revolving, I could not help condemning secretly

cretly myself as visionary ; but it seems as if I did not know that the same Omnipotence which takes away, can again restore.

I travelled post, and had a speedy journey ; winds, waves, and roads were favourable to me, and seemed to facilitate my arrival. The first person I saw in Montpellier, was Mr. Morley ; he was amazed, and indeed at first was apprehensive of some evil tidings from our common friends, but seemed perfectly happy when assured of their welfare. He is anxious to see his little nephew as soon as he can undertake such a voyage in safety. I hastened the moment I could quit Mr. Morley to the house of the Advocate, he was luckily at home, and without delay, upon finding who I was, put into my hands the following papers, which I shall here transcribe for your perusal.

CLARA

CLARA ST. RUE TO MR. EDGECOMB.

[Left in the hands of M. de Sace, Advocate, Montpellier.]

IT being impossible that mortals can know at what period they may be called away, or how short may be their notice of so important a change, I have therefore left the subsequent lines in the hands of M. de Sace, as they may serve at a future time to further the discovery of an interesting event.

To you, Mr. Edgecomb, I must now address myself; say, can you pardon the woman, who at the moment your heart bled with anguish, and your body was sunk with grief; in the moment that in the first bitterness of woe you deplored the loss of that angel whose attachment was sealed by her death, can you forgive her who has reiterated the blow, and snatched away from your widowed arms the living image of your Caroline? yet I dared to do this deed to obey the last request of your dying love, who at the moment when human weakness generally for-  
gets



gets its dearest ties, studied even in her last anguish, your future welfare, happiness, and honour. Never will her last moments be effaced from my remembrance; even now I see her, I behold her hands and eyes supplicating Heaven for you, when the power of speech was lost; and I still in imagination see the last placid smile that overspread her face. I snatched up my precious charge, and on the cold hand of its sainted mother, swore to observe her dying request with fidelity, the explanation of which I am now going to lay before you as succinctly as possible.

The day she was so shamefully compelled to appear at the grille by the interested community, her agony of apprehension, and your unexpected appearance threw her, as you heard, into immediate labour. Her father waited in one of the parlours to hear how she did, and as being a favourite in the convent, I had been permitted that day to enter. I was requested by the sisters to go down and inform him of what they termed this new misfortune. I went down accordingly, he could scarce dissemble his confusion before me, and hammered out something of  
having

having been much mistaken. He lamented the distressed situation of his daughter, assured me he would himself be the guardian and protector of her child, and begged by the remembrance of all the days of happiness he had afforded her, that she would send it to him. I returned, and acquainted Mrs. Edgecomb with all that had passed; she exerted all her strength, and after a pause, spoke to me thus: That I have erred, my dear Madam, I am fully sensible of; but I now feel convinced that my errors are forgiven, and that my death will shortly bury them and my poor remains in oblivion; yet Madam, Mr. Edgecomb is as much my husband, notwithstanding my breach of duty, as Sir Richard Ratcliffe is my father; and my husband has the undoubted right of alone disposing at his pleasure of this unfortunate babe. It is a delicate point; I would wish that my death might terminate every obstruction towards reconciling my father and husband. I vainly flattered myself that this child would have been the pledge of peace, instead of the subject of future contentions, as you say my father adopts it alone on the hard condition of its being

ing an alien from its father. She paused to take breath, when I took the opportunity to offer my services, and added, I would with pleasure undertake any thing for the child's advantage she should dictate, at that moment my enthusiasm was worked up to so high a pitch, that I would have sacrificed every earthly consideration for her. She took my hand, and looking earnestly at me, exclaimed in a low voice, gracious Heaven! this from a stranger, but you are the instrument of providence to soothe my last hours, and I will trust you with all the purpose of my soul, I will give into your care this sacred deposit, all the wealth a wretched parent can have to boast. She took up the child, wept, kissed, and bedewed it with her tears; let her, cried she, be concealed from both, Heaven forbid, that I should anticipate the event, but by the course of years, my father can scarce live till she has reached maturity, and if Heaven should spare my dear Edgecomb till then, with what transport will he receive from you this last gift of his Caroline, whose dying moments he has cheered with the knowledge of his unceasing affection. Ah, tell him, if you meet,

that

that I valued life only because I imagined my death would give him pain, his emotion which you this day witnessed, and the abrupt end his presence caused to that fatal ceremony, alone sufficient to have deprived me of existence, have all tended to confirm his love, and the recollection of that is a cordial to my evaporating spirits. Ah, my God! forgive me, if in these last moments of my existence, dying as it were before thine altar, the remembrance of my beloved husband will yet mingle with thine.

Quite spent, she fell back senseless upon her pillow, and remained in that state some minutes; at length recovering, she turned to me, my friend perhaps the charge I have given you will be too embarrassing, if so, tell me before it is too late. I again repeated in the most solemn manner that I would abandon every consideration upon earth to do her service, that I had before intended to leave Montpellier, as the dissipations of my late husband had much reduced my income, but yet I had a sufficiency left to support with economy myself and the sweet babe, who, instead of an incumbrance, would be an alleviation to my cares, and a  
com-

comfort to my declining years. She pressed my hands to her breast and said, yonder, my dear Madam, is a small box, take it into your possession, it contains a few valuables, if not necessary towards your subsistence, they are at least such ornaments as may serve one day to convince her family that her pretensions to their alliance are justly founded. If grief or accident, indeed, should deprive her of her father, it is needless to add that she may then be conveyed immediately to mine.

After being thus well assured of that attachment which her misfortunes as well as her virtues had given rise to, she reclined upon my arm, and with a sigh fled to that society her pure soul was fitted to enjoy. In consequence of her desire, I had wrote to you, and in ambiguous terms gave you to understand you had a child as well as a wife to lament, in fact they were equally lost to you.

The nuns readily permitted me to take the child, believing it my design to deliver her up to her grandfather, when the first transports of his grief were subsided; the violence of them, and your long delirium gave me all  
the



the time I could wish to report the death of the child as having happened immediately after that of its mother, and finally to arrange all my own affairs in order to bid an everlasting adieu to Montpellier. Should I survive Sir Richard Ratcliffe, with how much pleasure shall I present you a daughter worthy of all your tenderness, should Heaven till then preserve, and give her the disposition and virtues of her mother.

(Signed)

CLARA ST. RUE.

This was the paper left in the hands of De Sace, he told me that all the relations of Madame St. Rue had believed her dead for many years; he alone, who forwarded her remittances, knew to the contrary. About three months since he received a letter from her, begging him to send her word, whether a report she had heard circulated respecting the death of Sir Richard Ratcliffe was true or false. He immediately wrote her a confirmation of it, and received a small box, together with the inclosed letter, which she begged might be given by me into the hands of the person to whom directed, (yourself) should she not recover to reclaim them. The letter run thus:

“Alas, the sand of life is just run, and a little moment longer is denied me to resign my sacred trust. What will you think of the presumptuous woman who has disposed of the hand of your daughter! My time is too short to explain at large my reasons, the account she can give you of our manner

manner of life will evince them. Suffice it to add, that observant of my oath never to reveal her to you during the life of her grandfather, and feeling the fast decay of mine, I dreaded not death itself so much as the leaving this sweet girl unprotected and persecuted by lawless passion, in a world of itself so replete with dangers, and in fact without subsistence, my income dying with me, and the little I had saved partly expended by a severe illness. A character so universally good as Augustus Lumley's promised for her the protection I could wish. His attachment had been tried, it had existed years, during which time he had not failed to remember and search for his Matilda. For determined that not a vestige should remain, that could in any wise discover us, she bore, instead of the name of Caroline Edgecomb, that of Matilda Wilson. I claimed the authority of a mother to sanction this union, and that I have some little claim, I think even her father will not disallow. Should his blessing also ratify their union, I shall rest in peace. I have this moment received the confirmation of Sir Richard Ratcliffe's death, and if speech be granted me but

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a little longer, I shall acquaint my beloved Caroline, in whom she is to seek a father. Adieu, my eyes fail. Fain would I have witnessed the long desired interview, but it cannot——be.

CLARA ST. RUE.

It seems she lost her speech whilst sealing the packet directed to De Sace, and never recovered it sufficiently to pronounce any thing more than some incoherent words; all that they could distinguish of which was Montpelier. That was sufficient to determine them as soon as Mr. Lumley had published his marriage and adjusted some affairs to go thither. In conformity to the direction upon her last letter they sought out De Sace. He, who is really a worthy man, dissembled all knowledge of the deceased's affairs, and told them they must be content to wait till another person should arrive, who could alone satisfy their curiosity.

Thus, my dear Ned, can the wonder working hand of Providence bring to pass things deemed impossible, or impracticable; but as you once I remember told me, I have now no time for moralizing.

I hastened with De Sace to the hotel in which Mr. and Mrs. Lumley had taken up their abode. I would not let him appear at the first, but sent in my name.

H 3

I was



I was immediately admitted. He was painting, and his charming wife reading to him; what a portrait for a fond father! We conversed some time upon indifferent subjects; at length Mrs. Lumley said, if not impertinent, Sir George, is it to business or pleasure we owe the unexpected favour of seeing you here? if the latter, I almost hope your arrival is only the forerunner of that of our good friends from Harcourt-Castle. I could dissemble no longer, my journey, Madam, said I, is occasioned by business of the most pressing nature, and my visit to you was to fulfil a commission intrusted this morning to my charge. This box, Madam, is yours. She examined it. My God! cried she with great emotion, this surely belonged once to my dear Mrs. Wilson. I never could find it after her death; by what chance has it fallen into your hands. Answer me first, returned I, do you know the contents? No, replied she, not justly, she always told me they were some trifles of my mother's. Open it then, interrupted I, with eagerness, I think the contents will tell you all. She did it with a trembling hand, whilst Augustus, with the eye of ardent anxious love, watched every turn of her expressive

expressive countenance. She turned over a vast many trinkets, some very valuable ones, but the last, and indeed what I wished her to find, was my picture. It was taken just after my marriage, and notwithstanding the lapse of years is still a striking resemblance. The moment she beheld it she exclaimed, it is, it must be him, my father! and rushed into my arms. Augustus was for some moments silent, though far from an unconcerned spectator, and the moment he found the certainty of her exclamation he caught a hand of each, and pressed them to his bosom, as if demanding his share of joy. I cannot describe my feelings at this moment, but they were certainly more elevated ones than I ever before experienced. I knew that I had once been a husband, and felt that I was now a father. I experienced the bliss of beholding my child, and every keen sensation kindled again in my breast for the loss of her mother. I felt that I had unknowingly assisted to save my child from ruin, and thus received the reward of universal philanthropy. She was a child of sorrow, and therefore claimed my protection. May every oppressed innocent

find like her a friend in the moment of adversity.

We could not for some time recover from our mutual transport, at length I recollected M. de Sace, and he was requested to come and partake the general joy which I believe he did most unfeignedly. I communicated to Augustus the letters which cleared up every shadow of doubt. The news was soon divulged, and we were overwhelmed with visits of congratulation.

A few days we devoted to pleasure, but I now begin to reflect upon the properest means of justifying my Caroline's claim to the fortune of her grandfather, who not knowing of her existence, has let it descend to a very distant relation. De Sace has made out an account of the whole affair, which I have sent you properly attested, and beg you will employ some able counsel to take it immediately in hand, as our presence here a little longer is unavoidable.

My Caroline is all life and spirits, the continual gloom occasioned by her obscure situation is entirely worn off, and she is now the happiest of the happy, with a husband and a father who adore and esteem her; but in the midst of all  
her

her pleasure a rising sigh often intrudes for poor Juliana. Would to Heaven she were half so happy as my Caroline.

Mr. Lumley had yesterday letters both from Campbell and Meredith, with an account of her situation, and the villany of her husband. Knowing the opposite characters of the writers, you may well suppose they were very different. The one exculpates him as much as possible, the other condemns with equal violence. Mr. and Mrs. Lumley both unite in offering her a home upon their return to England, or sooner if she is able to bear the journey; add my intreaties and a little of yours, and my dear Anna's irresistible eloquence, and we may perhaps prevail.

I begin now, my dear friend, to feel that I shall enjoy life. I have naturally a social disposition, but my griefs caused me to shun the immediate intercourse of all but those friends who knowing my story would make allowances for my frequent absences of mind. I have now claims to endear the world to me. I shall live with my children, and if ever an unbidden discontent should find its way into my breast, I will look

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in the cheerful face of my Caroline and  
forget it all. Adieu, my dear Ned,  
believe me faithfully

Yours,

G EDGECOMB.

LET-



## L E T T E R   X C.

LADY MARY MORGAN TO LADY ORMESTON.

**T**HE return of my nervous disorder rendering the communicating any thing to me that might affect my spirits dangerous, prevented my knowing sooner the distress of my beloved niece ; but I have made ample amends for being till now ignorant of it, my tears have flowed incessantly for you. Gracious God ! what a wretch, but I have long suspected him, happy for your interest had you also, my poor Juliana ; but in having quitted him, your virtue might have been calumniated. For Heaven's sake shake off any impression it may cast upon your spirits. Conscious of having scrupulously performed your duty, shut not your ears to the consolatory aids of friendship. Come to us at Montpellier ; the air is salutary, and the society cheerful. Come to me, I will be your mother, and aid your good sense to dispel your chagrin. Sophia bids me assure

sure you of her unceasing attachment, and you will find several here to whom your recent sorrows have doubly endeared you. Sir George Edgecomb is become quite a different being, he is cheerful, gay, and unreserved; such changes are the human mind capable of. He has found in Mrs. Lumley a most deserving daughter, every body admires her, and I think her story sufficiently shews that a constant perseverance in virtue will ever in the end be rewarded. Few young women have been so unfortunate as yourself, and few, very few, have conducted themselves through so many trials, and bore such accumulated injuries with so much prudent fortitude. I think, with singular pleasure, that slander never had room to breathe against you; though there are always those sufficiently malicious, to interpret wrongfully the most innocent behaviour, yet hitherto I have never heard you mentioned but with the respect due to your virtues. Should this unfortunate event give rise to malevolent reports, arm yourself against them my beloved Juliana, bear your persecutions with patience, and  
 I have

I have not a doubt but your future days  
will be marked with a brighter lustre  
than you have hitherto experienced.

Yours,

M. MORGAN.

L E T.

## E T T E R XCI.

LADY ORMETSON TO LADY M. MORGAN.

HOW few, like you, my dear Madam, are kind enough to soothe the feelings of the wretched, and alleviate the anguish of a wounded spirit; yet, in that respect, I am surely the child of fortune. I am surrounded by friends who anxiously vie with each other in endeavouring to serve or amuse me; but they are not my relations. No, Madam, with tears I add, I am renounced by them. My brother has influenced my father, (who, ill, and in Scotland,) is too far removed to know the truth. This cruel brother has induced my father to believe that the imprudence of my conduct has brought all these misfortunes upon Lord Ormeston, and compelled him at length to quit the kingdom. I have wrote, but my pleadings are all in vain, in answer, I have only received four lines, to say, that in consideration of the family to which I unhappily belong, and whose name I once bore, he will allow me

me three hundred a year, provided I live abroad. Thus am I a banished out-cast, and though calumny has not dared to impeach my honour, she has my principles. The pride of my brother would not suffer him to assert any thing that might disgrace himself, but all he can save that, he has heaped on me, but I shall not, I trust, trouble them long, and during my few remaining years I will bury myself from their machinations. I will fly to you my dear Madam, for shelter from paternal unkindness and fraternal hatred. Unfortunate that I am, the hand of heaven alone sustains me from sinking under my oppressive woes. We have heard that Lord Ormeston has been seen at Paris, but did not stay many days. You exclaim, happy had you left him. Ah Madam, from the tenor of my conduct towards him alone I draw my every consolation. Sanctioned by my father's approbation, and under his roof I might have defied the calumnies of those who delight in scandal; but yet even their reflections would have been a disgrace. We daily see instances how little those women are respected who are separated from their husbands, let the circumstances be ever **s**o urgent, and I  
would



would have suffered death rather than have subjected myself to such humiliations as I have witnessed. A little pride remained which neither insults nor misfortunes were able entirely to subdue; yet surely the measure of them is nearly complete. Rejected by my father—forsaken by my husband——banned from my country! I am become a wanderer indeed, I have no more tears, their sources are dry, but I bear a wounded spirit, far more painful than outward noisy sorrow. I am rejoiced at the happiness of our friends, and felicitate the worthy Sir George and amiable Caroline upon the event, which will conduce to the future happiness of their lives. You bid me, my worthy Aunt, to look forward with hope to better days. You bid me like her expect a reward for persevering in the paths of rectitude. Alas, never in this world can I expect it. I have no father to extend towards me the arms of fond affectionate love. Gracious God! —— mine has——renounced me—— He has left me a prey to anguish. Deaf to the voice of nature, he abandons me to despair. Adieu, my dear Aunt, expect

pect me soon at Montpellier, your maternal protection will afford some comfort to the unhappy

J. ORMESTON.

L E T.

## LETTER XCII.

MISS OSBORN TO MISS MARSDEN.

I Am happy to find, my dear Charlotte, that your journey proved so agreeable; the weather was certainly very favourable; ours was infinitely shorter than yours, but in that point very pleasant. Montpellier will be very gay, with so large a party.

My brother heard I suppose from Meredith of your accompanying our friends abroad, and returned three days ago. The Viscount and his brother Lord Frederic dined at the Vale the same day; a fortunate day I will call it, but shall not acquaint you why I do so till I see if my hopes are realized. Henry I am confident still so ardently loves you, that he distrusts his own strength of resolution, and dares not see you; he fled solely to avoid an interview. I was resolved to vindicate you, and mamma promised to support me. She began by telling him how

how delightfully we had passed six weeks with you in London. He coloured, and said he was glad of it. I then took it up with more spirit than I thought myself mistress of, I begged he would confide to me the reason of his extraordinary behaviour to you, related the anxiety you had always expressed during his voyage to India, both for his safety and return. Nay, I even read him all your letters during that period. He listened with attention till I came to the circumstance of the picture, he then started up with greater rage than he ever before manifested in our presence, exclaimed, devilish art! to what a length hast thou been carried! And then endeavoured in his turn to convince me, that this was all a scheme of yours to sanction the Viscount's having your picture; but he obstinately refused to tell me how he came by it, or from whom he received the intelligence of your pretended falsehood. I could perhaps have spared him the trouble, but my friend must not be cleared by halves; we disputed very much; mamma would have reconciled us, but I refused to give him my hand till he had satisfied my questions: we have not spoke since.

I wish

I wish much for Meredith to come down, and have contrived matters so as to expect him. I shall prove him home before my brother. Ah, my dear Charlotte, my bosom beats with anxious hope; your fame is as dear to me as my own; I fancy it will not be long before you see Mr. Campbell, he wishes much to be with you, but is withheld alone by the fear of offending Lady Ormeston's strict sense of propriety. We were happy to hear she so well recovered her journey, and that the dear little Harcourt bore it so manfully.

The friend who undertook to mediate between Lady Ormeston and her father, has, he tells me, received an answer to the second remonstrance he sent, of his cruelty if possible ten times more bitter than the first. She must not know of it; Lord Frederic has quarrelled finally with his unworthy brother; he has hitherto kept up appearances with him, in hopes that gentle means and remonstrances might have some effect; finding them of no avail, he is set off post for Scotland, and vows his father shall both see and hear



hear him. Adieu, my beloved Charlotte, you shall hear again from

Yours,

DELIA OSBORN.

L E T.

## L E T T E R   X C I I I .

J. MEREDITH, ESQ. TO VISCOUNT  
MALCOMB.

I Believe I shall soon pass a few months on the continent, to avoid the consequences of unavoidable disgrace, which I am not very fond of keeping in view. You were devilishly deceived both you and Ormeston, when you set me on to dupe the Osborns, and particularly in Delia, who was reputed so mild and unsuspecting, this day has given proofs to the contrary. Take the scene as it passed, and send me a draft for fifty directly.

Little expecting the rising storm, and lulled into security by a kind message, I arrived at the Vale last night, the family were at supper with two or three neighbouring families; I was received with politeness by all, with his usual friendship by Osborn. I observed with surprise that the brother and sister usually so fond of each other, never exchanged a single word after the

the company retired. We separated immediately for the night, and the next morning met as usual, at nine in the breakfast-room; after the tea equipage was removed, Miss Osborn, with as much dignity as I ever beheld in woman, apologized for the liberty she was about to take, but, said she, the happiness, the tranquillity of our family is at stake, and you would wish us to believe you are interested in it.

I bowed assent, but Osborn rose in a passion, it is not to be borne, said he, not satisfied with tyrannizing over your brother, you must again insult him anew in the person of his friend, but I will not bear it, nor shall he; come, Meredith, and he offered to go, but she prevented him by saying with a firmness that made me tremble, if, Henry, you have regard for either sacred or moral ties, I conjure you to stay and give me an unimpassioned hearing. He seemed to hesitate. She continued, a few moments is all I ask, grant them me with patience, or painful as the trial must be, I will disclaim you for my brother, and a tear started into her eye. Osborn was still irresolute, he leant upon the back of his mother's chair; an interesting look from her

her determined him, and he was again seated.

Miss Osborn bowed her thanks to him, and addressed me thus: Mr. Meredith, I trust further apologies are unnecessary, and shall therefore only say, that my brother is in possession of a picture, from which all our uneasiness proceeds, he refuses me the trifling satisfaction of knowing how it became his; I apply to you, from whom I think he received it, and from whom, owing either to mistake or misapprehension he also owes the account of Miss Marsden's supposed infidelity.

By heavens, I was stunned. Osborn continually changed countenance, at length I reassumed my courage, Madam, replied I, do me the honour to believe the high respect, nay permit me to add love I bear you——Hold, Mr. Meredith, interrupted the little tyrant, touch not upon that theme, nor pretend love to the sister, whilst under the mask of friendship, you stab the unsuspecting credulous brother; it is to your arts, aided by Lord Malcomb, he owes all his past and present ills; it is ye who stimulated the lawyer to conceal my uncle's papers, thereby rendering my brother's voyage to India

dia necessary, hoping in his absence to gain Miss Marsden for the Viscount, but happily for her she is blest with a penetration far beyond our family, for she has long read the character of Meredith in its true light.

Those were her very words. I was cursedly lowered, but Osborn held forth a ray of hope; he averred Charlotte's partiality for your Lordship to be a fact, and added, he could not tell the reason why the nuptials were delayed, as he knew that after his return from India, you was three weeks in the same house with her, and that he had frequently been unseen a witness of his assiduities. I wished my tongue out for having ever told him that lie, about your being together during his illness at Harcourt-Castle, for it finished my disgrace.

Delia replied to her brother with great energy, produce your proofs, if they are admissible I will promise, never to see Miss Marsden more. He produced his pocket-book, and from it the forged letter: here all my hopes rested. There, Madam, said I, as she unfolded it, behold the proof of Henry's just resentment and my innocence. Rather, said she, with some asperity, as



she returned it, the most convincing proof of his misfortune and your villainy; had you, Henry, never seen my friend's writing, I would have held you more excusable, but on my honour, which I would scorn to pledge in a guilty cause, this is one of the vilest forgeries eyes ever beheld.

I now attempted to be very high. It is in vain, rejoined she, I am neither to be soothed nor intimidated, I know perfectly well the writing of Miss Marsden, and I aver this to be a forgery. I wish you could prove it such, said Osborn, with a smile of incredulity. I can presently, began again my tormentor, but first let me refute the charge, that Charlotte was three months together with the Viscount at Harcourt-Castle; that they were there together during the few days Lady Ormeston staid, cannot be denied, but I must also tell you that six weeks of that very period were spent in soothing the anxieties of a fond parent, in sharing with her the fatigues of the day, and endeavouring to dissipate the melancholy presages which surrounded her—and the nights in watching the unconscious object of those anxious fears, in attending to the prejudice of her health the  
ungrateful

ungrateful man who without listening to her defence, could banish her virtues from his remembrance, and vilify one of the most spotless characters heaven ever formed.

Heavens! exclaimed Osborn, starting up, can this be true? Charlotte here during my illness? she watch over me with tender anxious care? The mother who spoke but little, confirmed however this particular. I endeavoured to be calm, and said carelessly, we have been deceived then, Osborn; I think we have, answered he, very coolly, but all that now remains, Mr. Meredith, is for you to exculpate yourself, by fully declaring which you have often evaded, how you came by that picture. I was going to reply with great courage, when that dæmon in the form of Delia, interrupted me, by saying she could prevent the trouble, or at least strengthen my memory; and presented her brother with a letter, which curses on your carelessness, you dropped in the wood at Sanson-Vale, when you last dined there. She saw in picking it up, the name of Osborn, and thought it no breach of politeness to read the contents; it was the one I wrote you with the account of the whole proceed-

ing, and Osborn's credulity.—Curfes on your negligence, which has thus ruined all my projects, both for myself and you.

After this pretty discovery, her brother hastily begged her pardon, and turning to me, addressed me pretty roughly, insisting I should follow him, and render satisfaction. The women frightened, got hold of him; and whilst they reasoned and expostulated with him, I fairly decamped, and finding my horses ready saddled for my usual morning ride, I galloped off without loss of time. I write this whilst my horses are resting, and shall expect your answer, with the required draft in London.

Yours,

J. MEREDITH.

L E T-

## L E T T E R X C I V .

VISCOUNT MALCOMB TO J. MEREDITH, ESQ.

**Y**OU have yourself committed some cursed blunder, and wish to palm it upon me. I disclaim all future connexion with you ; your demands rise too high, especially as I have no longer occasion for your pitiful services. I have sent you ten guineas, which is more than you deserve, for having lost me the hope of obtaining the most charming of her sex ; however trouble me no more.

MALCOMB.

## L E T T E R X C V.

J. MEDITH, ESQ. TO LORD ORMESTON.

I Received yours, my Lord, and have transacted the notes according to your order; but when found out it will be necessary for me to be absent till the affair is blown over, as I endorsed them. I shall therefore join you at Florence, with the bills of exchange, which to prevent discovery I shall change again in Paris. I wish you had drawn them in Lord Malcomb's name, instead of Lady Ormeston's, as you know, poor woman, she has suffered a great deal, and if disposed to save you from public detection, cannot take up the notes without applying to her father.

There has been a full discovery at Ormeston's, and I may probably thank my friend crop for escaping with life. I scarce now think myself in safety. The Viscount has used me like a scoundrel, and I shall make no scruple of telling him so whenever we meet.



meet. By his own carelessness he gave birth to this discovery, then like a poor labourer that works for his daily hire pretends to discard me; but I will be revenged. You ask me about your wife, I know your only reason, but entertain no hope of a divorce; she is now at Montpelier, with your aunt Morgan. The Harcourts, the Edgecombs, and her friend Miss Marsden, who has never forsaken her since you abandoned her to such a scene of distress. Campbell is in town, and I fancy likely to continue. I wonder the old Peer was so generous, as I know all endeavours have been used to prejudice him against her. I have not much feeling, but I think her cruelly used. I suppose the Viscount fears her ascendancy over that weak man her father might be regained, so put in the clause of her living abroad. Adieu, I shall soon be with you.

J. MFREDITH.

## L E T T E R XCVI.

MR. OSBORN TO MISS MARSDEN.

TWENTY times have I attempted to address myself to the justly incensed Miss Marsden, but my agitated thoughts tumultuously crowding upon each other continually suggested that her anger would probably be increased by my presumption; but is it in your nature, amiable girl, to withhold your pardon from a penitent who implores it?—I think not.

Ah, Charlotte, even in the moment when I appear to you so inhuman, in that same moment that I believed you false, I was obliged to turn away my head to hide my weakness, to disguise the emotions of my soul, for had I once beheld your serenity and charming smiles, I should have forgot my cause of complaint, abjured my resentment; and listened only to love and you; happy if I had; how many hours of anxiety would have been spared me; fool that I was  
to

to listen to suggestions which my own heart should tell me were false. In the moment that I flew from you, I still loved you, adored you as ardently as when I thought you faithful. Judge then of my internal struggles, nature could not sustain the conflict, and you saw the condition to which I was reduced—you saw it indeed——.

Ah, Charlotte, surely at that moment had a ray of reason been allowed me, your kind solicitude, your unwearied attention must have removed my error, and convinced me I had erred. It has doubly aggravated the remembrance of them to think, that perhaps, to your cares alone I owe my present existence. Infatuated wretch! I was deaf even to my duty, my love to my sister, my respect to my mother were forgotten, and I listened alone to the rage which animated my bosom against you, and the supposed object which had supplanted me in your esteem.

Delia has been my real friend, even at the hazard of losing my affection for ever. She persisted in undeceiving me till her perseverance was rewarded by attaining its aim.

The wretch by whose art I have been so shamefully duped fled ere I could bestow on him the chastisement his villainy merits. Reconciled to my sister, tenderly beloved by my mother; all that remains is to solicit, Madam, your forgiveness. I would add more, but fear you have long deprived me of that place in your esteem, the preserving of which would have been the height of my ambition; yet, from the known regard you bear my family, I dare presume to hope for pardon at least. Ah, Charlotte, deny not this favour to the penitent

OSBORN.

L E T.

## E T T E R XCVII.

MR. CAMPBELL TO LADY ORMESTON.

I T has, I fear, my dear Madam, been registered in the book of fate that I am never more to see or address you but upon some occasion unfortunate to one or both. Indeed no circumstance, however trivial, can possibly give you pain, and leave me unmoved. But I forget that by such a preface I have raised an alarm which I certainly ought to quell.

The lawyer, whom I had the honour to recommend to your Ladyship, waited upon me this morning, with two notes to appearance drawn by you, the one to the value of two thousand pounds, the other five hundred. He told me, that being due, they were presented to him for payment, but suspecting them a little, he had brought them to me. I did not  
hesitate



hesitate a moment to pronounce them false. He desired me to look upon the back, and tell him how to act. They were indorsed by Ormeston, and lower by Meredith. I went immediately to the lodgings of the latter, but he is gone to the continent; could we find him or Lord Ormeston, we might proceed better, but I am afraid they will use the greatest vigilance to elude a search, which if successful, would involve both in a shameful detection.

The merchant who discounted the notes saw Mr. Meredith, and knowing his intimacy with my Lord, made no scruple of intrusting him without farther enquiry, as he stated it was a play debt of Lord Ormeston's, for which you had given your note; I wait your commands, but intreat you will not give yourself the slightest uneasiness about it, nothing having transpired, and the matter rests entirely between the lawyer, discounter, and myself; I would not even acquaint Lord Malcomb, unless you wish it particularly. I have only apprized you of it at all, in order to prevent future evils,

evils, but knowing to what your humane nature, and indeed your honour would prompt you, to permit me, my dear Lady Ormeston, to extricate you from the present difficulty. If my life cannot be spent with you, let it be at least dedicated to your service. I will banish myself from your sight if rigid virtue will have it so, but absent let me enjoy the privilege of a friend, I would now be truly such, Juliana, ready to advise you in every difficulty, and console you under every misfortune, rely at present upon me, give me power to act, and I will settle every thing properly.

Culpable as he is in the highest sense, I shall make no reflections upon the past or present conduct of Lord Ormeston, your known prudence and admirable discretion would be displeased at it, I shall therefore confine my ideas to my own bosom, and endeavour to save the husband of Juliana from shame and ignominy. Once I could not have mentioned him thus calmly, but you have taught me generosity; your refined notions of rectitude have learnt me some philosophy, and I now aspire to your  
friendship,

friendship, as the only good this world can afford me. I expect your answer with impatience, till then I have the honour to remain respectfully

Yours,

C. CAMPBELL.

L E T.

## LETTER XCVIII.

LADY ORMESTON TO MR. CAMPBELL.

GRACIOUS God! what have I done to merit such accumulated misfortunes! I did not think Lord Ormeston capable of so base an action, nor am I now quite convinced of its being his. May not Meredith, or some other as wicked, have done it without his knowledge? but you know his writing.

Alas, he can but too well tell how unable I am to advance him such sums, but it is also my duty to prevent if possible his being exposed.

I have every sense, Mr. Campbell, of your exalted generosity, but indeed I must not accept it, I cannot reconcile it to my feelings, the very idea is painful; I always had a proud heart, grief has in some measure subdued it, yet not sufficient to permit  
my

my receiving pecuniary obligations from any one out of my own family, but I can never forget the proof you have given of real friendship. Few people know the right use of that term, and adversity too often leaves the wretched deserted by those they thought most attached to them. My spirits are excessively flurried; I can scarce hold my pen, but I think my father must be consulted, and as it is for my Lord, I think it probable he will assist us; I enclose a letter for him, not knowing whether he is in Scotland; take the trouble to forward it to him, as the business will not admit of unnecessary delay. Should my father at my brother's instigation refuse his aid, Lord's Ormeston's family must be applied to; and tho' I know it will much straiten them, yet they will suffer any inconveniences rather than expose their name to inevitable disgrace. I will with pleasure give up the half of my income, and retire with the remaining pittance to some obscure corner unknowing and unknown.

Adieu, Mr. Campbell, assure yourself



self that whilst I live I shall never  
cease to remember those offers I must  
reject.

J. ORMESTON.

LET-

## LETTER XCIX.

MISS MARSDEN TO MR. OSBORN.

I Cannot hesitate, Mr. Osborn, to accord you my forgiveness, but at the same time I must be permitted to expostulate a little upon the cruelty of your having so readily given credit to the malicious tale which rendered it necessary. The letter and picture I acknowledge proofs strong enough to confirm any suspicion, but at your return, finding me yet unmarried, and I flatter myself my conduct such as must have contradicted your proofs, authentic as they seemed.

I made no doubt but the picture which I had lost upon the Dartford-road was irrecoverably so, but it is now manifested that the robbery was contrived by those who had such scandalous schemes to effect thereby. With a mind so prepared to reject me, I could not have expected any other than the cruel reception I met with, but surely you might have listened to the voice of  
an

an affectionate parent, and a virtuous sister, could you imagine them united to deceive you? or could you believe me so effectually changed as to possess art enough to blind them and the whole world? Ah, Mr. Osborn, I must think that the frequent remembrances you had of me very unpleasant ones, or surely after the first heat of passion had subsided you would have sought rather than shunned to justify me.

I own I was miserable, beholding myself as the cause of such unhappy dissensions in your family, for I love your mother as my own, and Delia as my sister, yet I must have torn myself from them, have given up their society for ever, had you persisted in your cruel error. Thank heaven, the cloud is dispersed, and that trial is spared me. I repeat again, that I sincerely pardon you, and felicitate you and the family upon the timely discovery of the false friend, whose successful arts having destroyed your peace, and interrupted your domestic engagements, would probably have been levelled at your fortune or life. Indeed I hold the man much the  
most

most excusable, who with a pistol demands at once boldly your life, than the wretch who veils with the mask of friendship and hypocrisy, designs infinitely more black and dangerous. I wish you, Sir, all possible happiness, and at my return to England shall see with pleasure, the *son* of Mrs. Osborn, and the *brother* of my friend.

C. MARSDEN.

L E T.

## L E T T E R C.

MR. OSBORN TO MISS MARSDEN.

C RUEL Charlotte, I must yet write, in spite of that chilling coldness you have expressed. I must paint to you my respect, and if possible, increased adoration. I acknowledge that I ought to have been less obstinate in following with so much ardor the dictates of my resentment. Had I loved you less, I might perhaps have done it; but I knew too well the value of the object I imagined lost to me for ever to bear with it tamely. My spirits were kept in continual agitation, and some fresh proofs of your falshood daily attested by that villain, I blush to think I ever called him friend. You candidly allow I had room to suspect, but why believe the continuance of a passion so strongly implanted in my bosom is only chimera. No, Charlotte, I repeat again, I never ceased to adore you. If this accursed fraud renders me the object of your detestation, will it be acting with your accustomed generosity? Was it a fault arising



arising from a fickleness of disposition which I intreated you to forget, you would have reason to reject and despise me. But why do I expostulate? if your affection for me is no more, why should I seek to disturb your present serenity, by the complaints of an unfortunate being you think unworthy further notice. Better for me to bury my feelings in my own bosom, than to diffuse any part of my sufferings to disturb the happiness of her whom I so highly prize. How painful is the retrospect of a few months. Blest with your esteem, my heart dilating with the thoughts of soon returning to you, possessed of that wealth, the wish of obtaining you made me alone covet the search of, I saw the preparations for my departure with transport. I saw the sails hoisting and whitening aloft, my foot was already in the boat, when the fatal packet was put into my hands. I had just time to write a few lines, by a swifter sailing vessel than ours to apprise Meredith of my return and thank his, as I thought it friendly information. Ah, Charlotte, recollection, reason, all fled, the dreadful tidings were alone present to my imagination. I gazed upon the inanimate

mate portrait with a stupid attention, it was my companion, my monitor, my friend. I looked continually at it, and the sweet smile it wore fed the flame I still cherished in vain. I was reproached by Meredith for my weakness in loving so ungrateful a creature. Thus have I been duped, and the cup of happiness dashed from my lips; in vain have I been restored to the wishes of my affectionate friends, they will be as lost to me, and ah, how envied they will enjoy your friendship and your esteem. Adieu, Miss Marsden, it shall ever be my prayer that the happiness I can never enjoy may center all in yourself; forgive my intruding again upon your time, it is the last.

H. OSBORN.

L E T.

## LETTER CI.

MR. CAMPBELL TO LADY ORMESTON.

WITH extreme pleasure I congratulate the amiable Lady Ormeston upon being finally extricated from a dilemma which promised so much distress and embarrassment.

Your lawyer waited upon Lord Malcomb (at present in town) agreeable to your request, but found him inflexible, and instigated by your brother, that scandal to his name, is more irritated against you than ever. He gave your letter to him, he read part, suppressed the rest, and flung it in the fire. Happy circumstance I was not present, I could never have restrained the indignation of my soul at such treatment of a woman, they were unworthy of being allied to; but if ever I gain the ear of Lord Malcomb, which at present is not easy, I will awaken every feeling of the parent in his bosom, if nature himself be not dead within him. I am convinced it is the fear of offending his imperious son, for Lord

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VOL. I

Frederic has vanished like yourself to his regiment in Ireland, for having quarrelled with the Viscount. What confirms my opinion is, that he the next day sent a gentleman to learn the particulars of the affair from your lawyer.

I found it absolutely necessary something should be done, and was going to order applications to be made to the Ormeston family, when I was informed the notes had been secretly taken up by Lord Malcomb, with a strict charge that you should remain ignorant of his having done it, lest any letter acknowledging the favour might fall into the hands of your brother.

Why, Juliana, do you praise me, and talk to me of generosity, when you will not suffer me to exercise common friendship towards you? Lay aside, my dear Madam, all reserve, and confide your cares, your anxieties to me. I will sooth the latter, and take the former upon myself; and as the first privilege of friendship is to advise, I would recommend the tracing of Lord Ormeston, in order to inform him of the extreme difficulty you have had to save him from public disgrace, and that you can positively do it no more.

But as this is an office of a delicate nature, if you permit, I will seek him myself upon the continent, and represent it to him in the genteelest manner possible, I will bear with him for your sake. I will remember your strict sense of duty, whether as wife, daughter, or sister. I will forget all the misery he has heaped on me, all that he has caused you to suffer. I will plead the cause of a lovely injured wife, and strive to snatch her infatuated husband from the precipice on which his unsteady feet are tottering. Elated almost to enthusiasm at the idea of bringing back to you the repentant Ormeston, convinced of his errors and suing to be forgiven, I was checked by the recollection 'twas he who deprived me of Juliana, and should he rush on and perish in the gulph open before him, she would again be free. The idea was tempting, I laid down my pen to pause; how I despised myself for it; how weak are mortals; why cannot we be uniformly great, but that rarely happens.

After again execrating my ungenerous thought, I hurried away the remembrance of it, and determined to act up to the first dictates of my heart.

I will



I will not even leave you a negative, Lady Ormeston, but rather incur the risk of your displeasure than wait for a refusal dictated alone by your extreme delicacy. Adieu, Juliana, for the last time I will say my beloved Juliana, be not angry at my presumption, mine is that refined attachment which angels themselves might profess without a blush, it is blended with respect and esteem. Once more Adieu,

Yours,

C. CAMPBELL.

## L E T T E R CII.

MISS MARSDEN TO MISS OSBORN.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

**H**OW much does the circle of your numerous friends at Montpellier regret your absence, our pleasures are not complete without you, and could wishes work miracles we should soon have you amongst us.

Lady Ormeston carries in her bosom the rankling shaft of painful misery ; she intreats if Mr. Campbell has not yet left England, that your brother will see, and intreat him, in her name, to think no more of his intended scheme. He has formed the generous, though romantic idea, of seeking Lord Ormeston, and endeavouring by dint of reasoning to convince him of the injustice he has done his charming wife. In the days of chivalry such an undertaking might have been crowned with success, but not I fear in ours.

We

We all know the peculiar warmth and energy of Campbell's temper, therefore with reason every thing is to be apprehended from their meeting. Juliana daily shudders at the thought. What has not this amiable woman already suffered? and though her health visibly declines, she may yet live to experience more ill-usage. She dreads lest her father should be induced to withdraw her present income, and leave her to all the misery of dependance. The ideas I form of such a situation are horrible, and situated as she is, a release from more is almost to be wished. You will begin to think me very ungrateful to my dear girl, that I have not yet thanked you for the zealous attachment you have manifested; though Lady Ormeston has occupied so much of my attention, yet I have not forgot the justice you have obtained me. Your brother has distressed me extremely, he is not satisfied with the free forgiveness of all the hours of bitter anguish he has caused me, but he would have me again confide in his professions of esteem. Heaven knows, Delia, how unwillingly I reject them, but prudence forbids my listening to him. Were I to forget all,

and unite my fate to his, probably upon every trifling occasion he would give way to suspicions, which though groundless in themselves, and easily cleared, would render us both miserable.

Tell him, my dear Delia, that I never will be another's, but yet cannot consent to be his. Reason with him, my dear girl, convince him of the propriety as well as justice of what I say, and I am sure upon reflection he will think as I do.

It is no small satisfaction that I shall be able to see you and your amiable mother without embarrassment, and the horrid idea of creating continual dissensions by my presence, in a family so happily united before they knew me. I trust we shall all meet with mutual pleasure, and believe me, the ties of relationship are not necessary to confirm my attachment. I believe the time of our return will be protracted much beyond the period talked of. We are to make a tour into Italy, and spend the carnival at some principal city. This will take up some time, therefore my good friends in England must not be too impatient for my return.

The Harcourts and Lumleys are all well, and as usual in perfect harmony.

Anna's

Anna's spirits are always the same. Lady Ormeston is in a great measure supported by their influence, and I think it hard to decide which Sir George Edgecomb loves best, his lately found Caroline, or Lady Harcourt.

Adieu, my dear Delia, may that returning calm which by your means I feel diffused through my whole frame, be no more disturbed, either by my own distresses, or those of others.

C. MARSDEN.



## L E T T E R CIII.

MISS OSBORN TO MISS MARSDEN.

FROM being your advocate, Charlotte, I am now induced to turn against you ; my brother has out-pleaded you, and in compliance with his pressing intreaties, I have set down with a full determination of scolding you on his behalf. He says in the first place it was extremely cruel to upbraid him so severely for an acknowledged fault, and in the next that it was much more so to persist in refusing him, after forgiving and owning you still love him, for I read him all your letters, by way of punishment to you. My impatience to call you sister makes me the more readily espouse poor Henry's cause.

I have asked my mother what part she will take in the dispute. Tell her, said she, I will not join to tease her at so great a distance, but when once returned I flatter myself she will not turn quite a deaf ear to my supplications. We are all against you, Charlotte, and I trust

trust a little of Henry's eloquence may shake your resolution, however firm you may at present think it. We cannot help grumbling at the length of time it will be ere you return. Tell Lady Ormeston her letter arrived too late; Mr. Campbell set off three days before, I hope his expedition will not be attended with the ill consequences you apprehend; his temper is hasty, but having so sincerely the happiness of Juliana at heart, he will doubtless be calm and prudent. The only evil resulting from it is, that she is much traduced by the world, who scruple not to say she is gone to her, nor will you imagine that the unnatural wretch the source of her misfortunes, who has villified her to her only surviving parent, attempts her justification in that point. Lord Frederic has been ordered from Ireland by the especial command of his colonel, but he is almost as much a stranger to his family as they are to his virtues. I had a grand dispute with the Viscount the other evening; we met at Mr. Barnston's; she is you know one of those ill-natured beings, who under the pretence of pitying the weakness of their own sex, secretly rejoice at bringing their own little merit to light by the less

meritorious means of exposing the frailties of others. I was scarce seated ere in the presence of a vast deal of company, she thus addressed the Viscount: Indeed, my Lord, words are inadequate to express my feelings for your family, but I trust the reports are vague. Gracious heaven! a woman who was held up as a model worthy of imitation, a miracle of prudence, but my regret must fall infinitely short of that experienced by a father and a brother. He bowed, and with well feigned grief remained silent.

With some astonishment, no doubt, in my looks, I enquired by what means Lady Ormeston, if she was the person alluded to, had rendered herself an object of compassion? Have you not heard then, Miss Osborn, replied the Lady, with an air of affected regret, that Mr. Campbell is set off in pursuance of her appointment to meet her in the south of France, and it is said, has received large sums from her, obtained from her father, under false pretences. It is, I fear, too true, added the wretch. Her brother shaking his head, my unfortunate sister has sacrificed not only the peace but honour of her family, to her own illicit inclinations.

Oh,

Oh, Charlotte, with what energy in that moment did I wish for Campbell; I could have delivered him with my own hand a pistol, and bid him wipe out the infamous slander with the blood of the defamer, but think not I remained silent, I addressed myself to Mrs. Barnston, with a determined air, since, Madam, said I, the brother of the cruelly aspersed Lady Ormeston, him who ought at least to conceal her failings, if he had no inclination to palliate them, so far from doing either, seems the loudest to condemn her, I will at least by rendering the report dubious, leave room for those who can feel for suffering virtue to vindicate that of my friend, and trust there are many generously candid, who will upon a doubtful cause incline to the most favourable side. I then produced your letter, and read publickly all that concerned Lady Ormeston and Campbell; every eye was fixed upon the Viscount; he seemed to shrink from observation and just contempt, he stammered out some incoherent thanks; and Mrs. Barnston hoped it was so; she had a vast esteem for Lady Ormeston, and should be sorry any thing happened to preclude a continuance of her acquaintance, but enlarged  
much

much upon propriety. Poor trifler, how I despised thee, and every one who like thee are eager to catch the slanderous bubbles broached to depreciate that excellence they behold at an awful distance, but are unable to imitate.

The Viscount soon quitted us, and was no sooner gone than every tongue was as loud in his sister's praise, as they had before been ready to condemn her. Such is the world, and such the instability of human ideas. I shall not speak any more of my brother, your indifference is so evident concerning him, that you probably do not wish it, and I will never more mention so hateful a subject, notwithstanding I shall ever be

Your's

D. OSBORN.

L E T.



## LETTER CIV.

LADY HARCOURT TO MISS OSBORN.

TEIZING girl, yet after my own heart too; 'you would never speak to Charlotte more of your brother,' and thus punished her strict reserve. Oh, how charmingly she fidgetted after reading your letter; tormenting Delia, cried she, were I in England I could soon know what he was doing, how he is, but at this cruel distance you might naturally suppose me possessed of a little curiosity. — Lady Harcourt, what do you think? That my dear Miss Marsden is very justly served, was my answer, laughing heartily. She turned away peevishly, psha, you are worse than Delia. Well, child, the day after this terrible letter of yours, we arrived at Florence on the first evening of the Carnival. We were too tired to go, and an hour after our arrival, Mr. Campbell sent in his name; Lady Ormeston retired, and we received him. After the first compliments Lord Harcourt told him plainly, that  
if

if he had any regard for Juliana, he must quit his present pursuit, and by returning immediately to England, confute every malicious report.

He was easily convinced, but said as he had written to a friend at Genoa, and was not far from thence, he should make it in his way home. Sir George Edgecomb who has business of great importance in England, accompanied him, and they sat off next morning. In the evening we went to the masked ball, all wrapped in dominos. It was with extreme difficulty we could prevail on Lady Ormeston to accompany us; but Mrs. Lumley and Lady Mary Morgan at last induced her to join the party. She held by my arm the whole evening, and was much persecuted by a mask, who spoke to her in Italian, and paid her the highest encomiums, to which she attended very little, at length he became so troublesomely officious, that we left the theatre much sooner than we otherwise should have done.

Lord Harcourt had attempted several times but in vain without proceeding to extremities to rid us of our troublesome attendant. The following evening no persuasions could induce her to go, and Miss Marsden staid at home with her;  
the

the rest of us went merely for an evening's lounge, as it was not a capital night. Juliana's new swain hovered near us, and often spoke to me about her, in terms of incoherent rhapsody. I asked him where he had known the lady he appeared so smitten with. He sighed deeply, I am a man, Madam, oppressed with misfortunes, I would have seen your fair friend to-night. I do not speak Italian well, but at length made him comprehend, she was married. I know it, was the laconic answer; and he mixed instantly with the crowd.

At our return I flew up stairs before the rest, to tell Juliana of the grief her absence had occasioned to the gallant Signior, when throwing open the door, imagine my astonishment, to behold Mr. Osborn seated between the two ladies. Ah, you sly girl, you knew of his coming. I stood rivetted to the floor, till your brother advancing, paid his compliments, with a grace all his own, I was sufficiently recovered from my astonishment to enjoy that of the rest. We were however all rejoiced to see him again, and enquired what miracle had restored him to us and the world again? He bowed to Charlotte, that lady, Madam.

So you must guess, as I did (for not a  
word

word will she confess) that a few submissive speeches and humble looks from your insinuating brother, have demolished all the fine structure of imaginary rigour, which pride and resentment had been so long erecting. Mr. Osborn readily promised to stay as long as we do. How can he do otherwise, when the magnet that attracts and holds him is with us? I told him this morning he was to blame if ever he quitted Miss Marsden, till she had given him her hand. A frown from the lady, and a salute from the gentleman, rewarded my advice, which he swore to follow, and I make no doubt will religiously observe his oath.

We have all teized Juliana so much, that to purchase peace, she promises her company to the theatre this evening, though with evident reluctance. Miss Marsden and Sophia Morgan are to be vestals, the rest dominos; it is expected to be very brilliant; I will describe to-morrow.

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## IN CONTINUATION.

One in the Morning.

AH, Delia, how soon are our ideas changed and painful sensations usurp the place of pleasures. I left my pen full of spirits and impatience to hasten to the scene of dissipation, and am returned with my feelings shocked, my humanity wounded in the highest degree, and deprived of all inclination or power to rest; the sighs of Lady Ormeston from time to time pierce the stillness of the night, and make my blood freeze with horror. I am now going to relate to you the particulars of this sudden and dreadful change.

We went at five to the theatre, which was crowded, and elegant beyond description. I had for a moment left the great room, finding it too hot; Juliana followed me, extremely agitated. I must go home, Lady Harcourt, said she, that mask is again here, he talks to me with an energy, an incoherence which alarms me, surely I think



think his voice not altogether unknown. I laughed at her flurry, and told her the gentleman should speak to him. We went to seek them. In passing, she caught me by the arm, there he is, said she, in a trembling voice, the elegant figure in a black domino; I cannot account for my sensation, but he strikes me with horror.

Mr. Lumley, who had joined us, hearing part of what she said, addressed the mask very politely, and begged, he would not persist in thus insulting a lady whom he was bound in honour as the wife of his brother to protect; the stranger appeared infinitely agitated, and replied that he allowed what he said to be just, begged pardon, and left us very amicably. I saw him as we were leaving the theatre speaking to another in one of the passages; he was uncommonly agitated, clapped his hands to his head, and had all the appearance of a madman. We passed him close. He rushed by me, and catching Lady Ormeston in his arms, exclaimed in English, "It is decided." I turned round hastily, the voice was not unknown. "One last embrace," continued

nued he, and putting a pistol to his head, fell at her feet.

The suddenness and horror of the action deprived us all of recollection, till we were surrounded by an immense crowd, brought together by the report of the pistol. Lady Ormeston, terrified to death, had fainted in Mr. Osborn's arms, and Lord Harcourt and Mr. Lumley raising the unfortunate man, were doubly shocked to find it was Lord Ormeston. The ball had fractured his skull, but not as he wished put a final period to his distressful existence, he yet breathed, and was conveyed to our hotel. Juliana was quickly apprised who the unfortunate being was; and to those whose sensibility leads to feel for misery can alone be left the conception of what she suffers from so shocking a catastrophe: I am sent for to her. Adieu.

A. HARCOURT.

L E T.

## L T T T E R C V.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

I Have attended Lady Ormeston to the chamber of death. The moment her spirits were a little recovered, she insisted upon seeing her husband. We would willingly have spared her such a dreadful interview, but she would not be dissuaded. The surgeons had just left him, and he was still sensible, though almost speechless; he seemed confused when Juliana presented herself before him, but stifling her feelings, and nobly forgetting her wrongs, she took his hand, conjured him to be composed, and for her satisfaction, suffer the surgeon to perform the necessary operations, which he had just refused. He feebly articulated, yes, and pressed her hand as if to intreat forgiveness. She assured him of that in the most solemn manner. He then made signs for the surgeons, and underwent several

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several severe operations, but would not let go the hand of Juliana. He fainted several times, and at length collecting all his force, he made an effort to rise himself, and looking at Lady Ormeston, who helped to assist him, with great pain he articulated, "If Juliana forgives me, Heaven surely will;" and sinking back in her arms, with a groan expired. The groan startled, and deprived her of her reason, and she has remained ever since in a most melancholy state. We had the body of the unfortunate Lord Ormeston, privately interred. His brother and Lord Harcourt saw that melancholy office performed yesterday, and all our attentions are at present fixed on his lovely widow.

I have sent you the letter found upon him and addressed to her, which was evidently written the moment before he executed this rash action, which terminated a life his vices had rendered odious. May his soul rest in peace, and meet with forgiveness in that state into which he has dared to rush wholly unprepared. I am extremely low; the remembrance of the horrid scene is perpetually before me :

JULIANA ORMESTON: OR,  
me: your brother also writes, I shall  
therefore not mention him. Adieu.

A. HARCOURT.

L E T

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## LETTER CVI.

[ Inclosed ]

LORD ORMESTON TO LADY ORMESTON.

**B**EHOLD in me, most exemplary of women, the sad confirmation of a truth I have long derided, namely that virtue and vice always meet their respective rewards. Ah, Lady Ormeston, from my own hand shall I shortly receive mine; the justice will be complete, and your wrongs avenged; even now you triumph; my soul is softened to conviction, and though too late to repair the evil, shudders at the miseries I have heaped upon you; my brain is bursting, Juliana, I wish, yet dare not ask your forgiveness. I saw you the other night, you never appeared more lovely, but you surely, presaged I came to bring you trouble, else why that cloud of sorrow on thy brow? Why else did you fly me with such precipitation, you thought perhaps the person

person bore some resemblance to that husband you have so much reason to execrate, but in death you will forgive me; I hasten at your feet to expiate my offences; at your feet I will release the claims I was not worthy of possessing, and free you from ties which though never pleasing to you, duty rendered easy. Horrid calm, horrid interval of suspense, all is torments within, and I look forwards to my unknown destination with expiation mingled with horror; yes, Juliana, thrice with unsteady hand have I poised the pistol, thrice has the thought of an unknown hereafter stopped my purpose, but it is now irrevocably fixed, and after one more farewell glance from you, I shall boldly execute it. The vile woman to whom I have been three years the weak mistaken dupe, has at length brought me to an effectual sense of my own baseness, she helped me to consume the princely fortune my father left me; and with shame I acknowledge my cruelty in suffering her under the same roof to insult perfection I knew not how to value. I hated you because you were good, and she won me by her blandishments and  
wanton

wanton arts to perpetrate every crime without remorse. The forged notes were the last and meanest. The money was quickly spent, or rather embezzled, and then in company with my accomplice and false friend Meredith she left me, to the remorse of conscience, and the effects of despair.

Oh, Juliana, forget not the wretched Ormeston, remember his end with a sigh, recollect that though his mistaken blindness caused your unhappiness whilst alive, that he has in dying done ample justice to your virtues, and afforded you all the reparation in his power: alas, how small a recompence!

Even at this last moment self will predominate; I dread though trembling on the verge of eternity, lest you should hold my memory in abhorrence, but you are all goodness, and I trust will bury your resentments in the grave that will shortly contain my miserable remains. Adieu, best of women, may the shock which thy native gentleness will of course receive, be the last trouble which shall embitter the peace of thy future life. I reflect with horror, that one of the abettors of my crimes has

been your own brother; if he has one spark of remorse, may my end teach him repentance, and the first proof of it be the restoring you to the bosom of your father, which he alone has steeled against you.

I would still continue, I have a thousand things to say, but my imagination is all on fire; the tumults of my soul crowd to my distracted brain, the hour of fate is nigh, the busy crowd throng to the theatre. I go; if I find you not amongst them, I will seek your hotel; life lingers only to expire at your feet.

ORMESTON.

L E T-

## LETTER CVII.

LADY MARY MORGAN TO LORD MALCOMB.

MY LORD,

THE public papers have, no doubt, ere this, prepared you for the melancholy confirmation of Lord Ormeston's death; the attendant circumstances were by far too public to attempt concealing that he fell by his own hand. Never shall I forget the horrid spectacle, the repetition would needlessly shock both your Lordship and myself, suffice it to say, that he expiated his offences at the feet of his unfortunate wife, who unable at present to solicit the returning affection of her father, has committed the task to me.

The justice, Lord Ormeston dying has done to her fame, she trusts will effectually remove your prejudices against her. The support you have hitherto so generously allowed her, and the readiness with which you latterly saved her husband from disgrace, are



proofs that the parent is not quite extinguished in your bosom, call forth the almost too powerful emotions of a soul naturally grateful. She desires me to send you a copy of Lord Ormeston's letter, and some other papers, which will convince you how much you have been deceived. Sweet mourner, even now with a faint voice she exclaims, Ah, my dear father, reject not your widowed child, throw not from you the ever dutiful Juliana. Ah, my Lord, you cannot, must not resist her. I was shocked at the end of my unfortunate nephew, but my admiration rose in proportion of the woman who forgave unsolicited his offences, and soothed, by her tender assiduities the bed of death. Her fortitude expired with his life, and she has been ill, very ill, ever since.

Let me conjure you my Lord, if you value your own peace, to shake off the bondage in which your eldest son has so long held you.

Restore to your daughter the confidential esteem she has ever merited. Destroy the illusion which has clouded your reason, and by the kind soothing of paternal tenderness, preserve a life which cannot exist longer

er without it. Persecuted through life, her wounded feelings require the balm of consolation, and her tottering frame the arm of friendship.

Reassume the father, and may your latter years be cheered with the society of your amiable daughter.

I am with great respect,

MY LORD,

Yours, &c.

M. MORGAN.

## L E T T E R CVIII.

MISS OSBORN TO LADY HARCOURT.

**M**Y dear Anna, your dreadful recital has thrown quite a gloom over the Vale. How shocking! a mortal rushing thus into eternity with all his crimes upon his head!

Unfortunate Osborn, how often has he been present to my ideas. Surely human nature can sustain a mighty load, or Juliana must ere this have sunk under such accumulated miseries. Hasten your return to England.——I am interrupted.

## IN CONTINUATION.

ANOTHER little cloud, my amiable friends, but I trust your friendly attentions will administer the necessary consolations to a mind already too familiarized to sorrows to need any additions to them; but it is the will of Providence which ordains, and we must bow before his dispensing hand in silence and ready submission. The person that interrupted me was Lord Frederic Malcomb, my attachment to his sister, and sympathy in her misfortunes rendering my company peculiarly pleasing to him, he has of late been often at the Vale, but though naturally serious, yet at this moment his disordered dress, and evident dejection while they spoke some alarming cause, terrified me infinitely. Excuse, my dear Madam, said he, this premature intrusion, I would not in my present state of mind have appeared before you, but my horses through fatigue were unable to pursue their journey, and I am come to beg the aid of yours to

the next stage. I am going to my father, who is at present at Bath, my errand is a melancholy one, but the affections of a son may soften evil tidings.

His manner awakened the greatest agitations in me, which he hastened to dispel, by thus relating the following events :

I accidentally, at Ranelagh, yesterday evening met my brother the Viscount ; though far from cordial, you know latterly we have kept up outward appearances. We joined, and in making the tour of the rotunda encountered Meredith, with the very woman hanging on his arm who had often been pointed out to me as the mistress of Lord Ormeston. Surprised at seeing them in England, especially so soon after the newspaper reports of the rash action perpetrated by Lord Ormeston, at Florence, I overlooked the contemptuous looks and cool bows which passed between my brother and Meredith, and turning round, accosted the latter, to know if the report was really true, and where my sister then was. Judge my surprise, Miss Osborn, when they told me with the utmost coldness, that they knew nothing of Lord Ormeston,

or



or the transaction I alluded to. I begged pardon for the liberty I had taken in joining them, and returned to my brother, who swore Meredith was one of the greatest villains existing, and upon our quitting Ranelagh, which we did very early, he unfolded a scene of complicated crimes of the blackest dye, in which I am sorry to own he bore but too active a part; but as you know them so well, Miss Osborn, the attempt to conceal or palliate them, would be equally vain. I shall therefore dwell no longer on the unpleasant theme. We supped together, at the St. James's Coffee-House, with several of our friends. My brother was called out; upon his return, I saw something unpleasant had happened, and after the free confession of his errors, I could not help being, in some measure, more interested for him than before. When we were alone, I questioned him, expressing my readiness to assist him in any cause I might avow without a blush. He forced a smile, and said, my own imagination had dressed up a phantom, for he had nothing new occurred. Finding him averse, I gave up the point, and we separated for the night.

This morning I was called about nine in great haste, and upon entering a parlour, found my brother weltering in his blood. He had just sense to press my hand and expired. The surgeon, when I was a little recovered from the shock, told me that he had been sent to by my unfortunate brother to attend him to Hyde Park at seven o'clock, in consequence of a challenge from Mr. Meredith, who having been offended at the manner in which the Viscount dropped his acquaintance, felt insulted last night at my accosting him, believing I did it at the instigation of my brother. Having followed us to the Coffee-House, he sent a gentleman to call my brother out, who delivered him a challenge. The murderer has fled. I call him such, as the surgeon affirms he fired before my brother had taken his ground. His aim was but too sure, and leaving his antagonist to the care of the surgeon and servant, he fled.

Having given all necessary directions I immediately sat off, lest the news should reach my father before I could arrive, and break it more gently to him.

Lord

Lord Frederic here finished the dreadful recital. I gave him your letter, which particularized the end of Lord Ormeston. It added beyond measure to his depression. He only stopped till the horses were ready to proceed with all possible expedition. He promised me at parting that he would seize the moment when his father seems most softened to plead for his sister. I trust he will be successful. Adieu, my dear Anna.

Yours,

OSBORN.

L E T.

## L E T T E R C I X.

LORD FREDERIC MALCOMB TO LADY  
ORMESTON.

**H**OW pleasing, my beloved sister, is the task I have undertaken ; with what celerity, do I haste to inform you of our dear father's sorrow for the past misunderstandings ; to dwell upon his errors would be unpleasing to so good a daughter. I shall then briefly say, he is convinced of her innocence and merit, and waits with impatience to behold her. Hasten then, ever dear Juliana, hasten to receive the paternal benediction, and the effusions of a father's love. Roused as from a dream, Lord Malcomb again centers all his happiness in you, and laments, in the most pathetic terms, his late blind injustice ; yet I am sure your benevolent heart will be pained by the recollection, that this change is brought about alone by the death of our brother. Unfortunate James ! peace to thy remains, and oblivion to thy faults.]

His

His Lordship begs his grateful thanks to Lady M. Morgan. He would have acknowledged under his own hand the obligations due to her Ladyship, if the gout would have permitted him. One thing he wishes her to know, though he cannot without a blush own it, namely, that he cannot arrogate to himself any merit from having afforded you any support, and so far from discharging the notes alluded to, he was taught to believe them the effects of your misconduct, and therefore peremptorily refused to take them up. It is therefore to some secret friend, acquainted with your virtues that you are indebted for these acts of generosity. Who more likely than Miss Marsden, or Lady Harcourt? for myself, I would only pine in secret my inability to relieve a sister I never ceased to love. I hope your present satisfaction will experience no other alloy than the melancholy end of these two unfortunates, who though your enemies during life, have by their repentance and premature deaths, merited the tear of humanity, and the sigh of forgiveness. Knowing the kind interests Sir George Edgecomb and Mr. Campbell have taken in your welfare, I have written them each an account of  
the



the change in your favour. May I add, that it is now the first wish of my heart to see you united to the latter. Yes, my sister, with transport I should lead you to the altar; too long has my Juliana's happiness been buried under the thick clouds of her sorrow, but it shall now resume its native smiles.

Lord Malcomb has not yet mentioned Mr. Campbell, but I am sure he will be easily induced to think as well as ever of him. Give us some idea of when you set forwards for England, and we will meet you at Dover. Had my father been in perfect health, we should have come further, so impatiently does he wish to call you again by the tender name of daughter. Our utmost gratitude is due to those friends whose exalted minds, above prejudice or illiberal persuasions, have by their kind attentions preserved our Juliana; long may she reward, by her smiles and virtuous friendship, all their attentive cares. Adieu, my sister, and believe me, you are impatiently expected by

Your affectionate

F. MALCOMB.

L E T.

## L E T T E R C X.

LORD HARCOURT TO MR. CAMPBELL.

A T the request of our charming widow, I just snatch a few hasty moments, to ask you a question, Campbell, which my own ideas have already fully answered. Your greatness of heart, and long grounded partiality, induced you to take an active part in her favour during all her late distressful situations; it was through the hands of the lawyer you recommended, she received the pension her father, as he said, agreed to allow her.

Lord Malcomb, convinced of his injustice, waits her return with impatience, but to our surprise, disclaims all knowledge of the pension, as well as the two thousand five hundred pounds supposed to have been advanced by him, he makes it perfectly easy to her feelings and his own, by supposing Miss Marsden or Lady Harcourt to be her concealed friends. We have with some difficulty convinced Lady Ormeston, that this suspicion is perfectly ground-

groundless, and induced her to fix her attention where I think there is much more reason to imagine her thanks are due. Acknowledge it then, Campbell, it is to you who have in this manner succoured distressed virtue, and by nobly concealing, added double lustre to the deed. No other reward but her charming self is adequate to the unparalleled action, and I doubt not but you will receive it sanctioned by her own and Lord Malcomb's approbation, as soon as decency will permit, notwithstanding the ladies look grave, shook their heads, and repeat every day how altered she is.

The dreadful shock she so recently received, has certainly weakened her very much. You will hear from Frederic when we are expected, and may meet us at Dover. It will be perhaps by the strict rules of decorum, too early for you to visit her, but remember you may avail yourself of having other friends in company. Adieu, Campbell, we are on the wing.

Yours,

HARCOURT.

L E T.

## LETTER CXI.

LADY ORMESTON TO LORD VISCOUNT  
MALCOMB.

MY dear Frederic, I can scarce credit this sudden reverse of my fate, the dear hope of a father's blessing is a cordial to my mind, and clings around my heart; I anticipate already the delights I shall experience in his smiles, and the happiness I shall again taste under his protection and yours. I was always convinced that my Frederic wanted alone the power, not inclination to be my protector and friend.

I feel sometimes an uncommon oppression of spirits, but I believe it proceeds from the transition so very quick from grief to joy, which your letter occasioned. Do not mention it to my father, it may make him causelessly unhappy, and I make no doubt but my native air and the intentions of my friends will entirely remove it. Often still, my dear Frederic, do I shed tears to the memory of the late unfortunates.

Alas,

Alas, poor James ! snatched away in the prime of life, with all thy unrepented errors on thy head ; but heaven is all merciful, and we must neither arraign nor question its decrees.

I have just got a letter from Mr. Campbell, in answer to one Lord Harcourt did me the favour of writing ; I send it you. Sure never was an obligation conferred in so noble a manner. You think my father will again receive him into favour ; the thought does not convey that joy to my soul one would imagine it should, considering his long and faithful attachment, together with the obligations I owe him. When I think of him, it is with a gloomy horror, as if some impending evil hung over my head. Tell him, for doubtless you see him often, that I cannot either as I ought or wish, express my gratitude, but that all the recompence a heart almost weighed down by affliction can give, shall be his, together with my hand, as soon as decency admits.

Ah, what do I say ! Ah, Juliana ! behold thy sable pomp of woe ; but four months a widow, and yet already promising to be another's ? Forgive me, Lord Ormeston, if at that moment thy memory was forgotten ; I will respect it  
in



in future, nor deviate from the line of propriety. Though my friends all are well convinced I never loved Lord Ormeston, yet they shall testify that I obeyed him while living, nor will despise his remembrance.

Affure our dear father that my eager wishes outstrip our leisure travelling; in another week I hope to embrace him at Dover. Adieu my beloved brother.

JULIANA ORMESTON.

L E T.

## L E T T E R CXII.

LADY ORMESTON TO MISS OSBORN.

**I**T is a long time that I have forborne to write to my Delia, I was unwilling to interrupt the peaceful sunshine of your days with my sorrows, but, my dear friend, they are all past, and I look forward to golden prospects. If ever we meet again, what a happy moment it will be to one who retains the highest sense of your goodness to her ; if we do not, I have a brother, Delia ; for his sister's sake as well as his own, let him be heard with kindness. Be not alarmed at the solemn manner in which I write, I have been just reflecting on the deaths of my husband and brother, which never fails to make me very low, and beguiles me of many tears ; add to this, I have been rather indisposed since our return to Montpellier ; I fancy the air does not agree with me, and we quit it this very day. All our friends accompany me

and

and one of our first visits in England will be to the Vale, expect therefore a very large party.

Mr. Osborn seconds my impatience to be gone, as Miss Marsden has promised to be his upon our arrival. She is, if possible more enchanting, more amiable than ever; she watches my frequent changes of countenance, and is ever ready to sooth my inquietudes, or amuse my melancholy ideas. Lady Harcourt undesignedly affected me last night, by proposing in her lively manner, that I should give my hand to Mr. Campbell the day Charlotte bestows hers on your brother. My weak spirits can alone account for the sensations I experienced, the idea seemed to shock me beyond description, and I was only relieved by a violent burst of tears. Something seems to whisper I never can be the wife of Campbell; my heart has been so long oppressed, that grief, like a canker, still preys upon it with corroding anguish; but these are dull thoughts to entertain my friends with. Suffer me at my return, my dear Miss Osborn, to spend a little time with you at the Vale; its sweet solitude, and your society will operate like a charm upon

upon my health and spirits. I am very unwell, and will conclude to-morrow.

[ Continued some time after from Calais. ]

BY MISS MARSDEN.

THAT melancholy task is left for me ; do not be too much alarmed, my Delia, at the common lot of mortality, nor suffer your grief to be carried beyond the bounds assigned by reason and religion. After such a beginning need I add, Juliana exists no longer, her pure soul is freed from the misery it has so long endured, and is doubtless enjoying in the realms of bliss, the reward of her patience and long sufferings. Ah, look, blest spirit, with an eye of complacency upon those who sincerely esteemed thee when on earth. I must leave off, an instant I cannot proceed, your brother has just left me, he found me in tears ; he succeeded in his endeavours to raise my spirits ; how sweet is consolation from those we love.

I have long thought Juliana advancing by slow degrees towards her dissolution ; but for these last six weeks, the quick changes of her countenance, the momentary exaltation or depression of her



her spirits, tended to confirm it to me. The day she began writing the above to you, she was seized with several faintings, but was more impatient than ever to proceed on our intended journey, and exerted her strength and spirits to the utmost to encourage us to set off.

The gentleman finding how ill she was; made our journey as commodious as possible, by pretending unavoidable delays upon the road; at length we reached Calais, here both her strength and spirits visibly failed. We persuaded her easily, for she was almost insensible, to go to bed, as the packet was not to sail till night. She complied, and I sat down by her; in about an hour she opened the curtain and in a low and hollow voice, taking my hand, said, my dear Charlotte, my innate feelings are not without foundation, I feel myself hastening very fast to a land of peaceful rest, the calm of death is gliding through my veins, and I shall find in its arms the reward of all I have undergone on earth, it is a friend I long sought in vain; perhaps it had been more welcome had it come sooner, but I am resigned; a father's blessing has rendered this last passage smooth; comfort him, my

my beloved Charlotte, tell him not to weep for me, that my heart, so long a prey to affliction, could not support so sudden a reverse, but after a few struggles, has burst in the conflict. My Frederic will cheer his declining years and supply the loss of his daughter. The last, and equally painful farewell is to come. She paused, and burst into tears, I always thought, said she, that I should never be the wife of Campbell; that had been bliss too great, my father may acquit my pecuniary obligations to him, but he can never, never equal the generosity of the actions. Ah, tell him dying I vowed myself his, my last moments are those of transport, for I can avow without a blush, that my only inducement to wish for life was the prospect of being his; heaven has interposed and I submit. She then sunk upon her pillow; advice had been called in, but they instantly agreed that every exertion of art would hasten, rather than retard her dissolution, and pronounced, that nature was quite exhausted. When she recovered a little, she pressed the hands severally of her weeping friends to her lips, and with a faint smile begged we would not distress her and render the last pangs painful. Night came on, and

I insisted upon sitting by her. There is no occasion, my Charlotte, said she, I am perfectly easy and inclined to sleep. I sat down, however, with her maid. In about an hour she hastily undrew the curtain, and called for me in a terrified tone of voice. I ran to her, and she threw herself into my arms, I have been dreaming, said she, I beheld before my eyes, the bloody corpse of Lord Ormeston, just as he looked when he fell at my feet in the theatre. Dreadful image, why appear at this moment to terrify and disorder me? Her voice began to fail, she articulated only broken sentences, and in half an hour expired with a sigh in my arms.

Death, although expected, is always dreadful; though I had prepared myself for this scene, I was overpowered at the moment, and sunk by the side of Juliana's body, nearly as lifeless and inanimate; they conveyed me from the chamber of death; but it was some hours before I could reassume my scattered senses; but the consideration of what the dear deceased had gone through, and the probability that had she lived, her days would have been all embittered by a tincture of the habitual melancholy into which she had fallen, reconciled  
me

me to our common loss. Thus at the age of twenty-four, has the world lost one of the most beautiful and virtuous of women, a victim to the cruelty and dissipation of her brother and husband. What soul possessing sensibility but must feel for her when rejected by her father, neglected by her husband, and yet acting up to every duty.

Repentance has come too late to save her, the deadly poison had spread its baneful venom over her life, the silver sand stands trembling in the glass; a few short days it ran its accustomed course, and then exhausted, left her cold and faded beauties.

We embark to-night and carry with us the remains of the once lovely Juliana. Lord Ormeston has wrote to her brother, pray heaven he receive it time enough to prevent her father's intended journey to Dover. Mr. Osborn calls; they wait only for me.

C. MARSDEN.

## L E T T E R CXIII.

MR. OSBORN TO MISS OSBORN.

THE meeting we all so much wished to prevent was I firmly believe, my dear Delia, permitted by heaven, to strike the miserable Lord Malcomb with the deeper remorse for his late censurable conduct and unpardonable blindness.

Miss Marsden told you all the particulars relative to Lady Ormeston's death, but is so much disordered at present, that she has begged me to continue the relation of our arrival here.

We embarked about ten at night from Calais, and after a tedious passage of ten hours, landed at eight the next morning at Dover. Lord Ormeston and myself went ashore in the boat, after persuading the ladies to remain on board, under the care of Lord Harcourt, till the body was carried on shore.

The first objects that struck our sight on landing, were Lord Malcomb, his son, Mr. Campbell and sir George Edgcomb. Lord Malcomb took our hands,  
you



you are then come at last, said he, for this week past we have been here waiting your arrival with the last impatience. How is my dear daughter? I could not speak, but turned from him. Campbell seemed instantly seized with terror, and exclaimed, where is she? let me go to the vessel, let me assist her on shore? Ormeston with the tears standing in his manly eyes, caught him by the arm. Stay, Campbell, my sister is well. The emotion, the manner, the words, operated on the quick imagination of Campbell like a stroke of electricity. He turned pale, and clasping his hands together looked towards the vessel; but what horror, what an end to all his hopes. He beheld the sailors slowly, and with the utmost care, lowering into a boat a sable bier. He groaned, and rested his head on the shoulder of Augustus. My sole care was Lord Malcomb, though I detested his former unnatural behaviour, yet, I could not at this trying moment behold his anguish unmoved. He threw himself on the coffin in all the bitterness of despair, he cursed his fatal prejudice, his weakness which had rendered him deaf to the voice of truth, and cruel to his innocent, his lovely daughter.

With difficulty we got them to their inn, the lively transports of Lord Malcomb's grief, and the silent anguish of Campbell, were equally distressing to their respective friends. Lord Frederic (now the Viscount) stifled his own feelings to administer consolation to them; but the afflicted parent was loud in his self-accusations. 'Tis I, unfeeling wretch, would he often exclaim, it is I that have killed my child. I forced her into the arms of a man devoid of principles or feelings, and when deserted by him I refused her even necessary support, and withheld the blessings of a father. Ah, Juliana, my present, my everlasting anguish amply revenges thee. Then seeing Campbell, it is to thee, exemplary young man, continued he, that she owed all her gratitude.——Had she lived——but now——Heaven can alone repay thee. Agony overpowered him as the coffin was brought in, and he sunk upon it. We wished to avail ourselves of this interval to take him away, but nothing could detach him from the remains of his daughter till every thing was ready to convey them to the mausoleum of the Ormeston family, situated as you may recollect in the Vale, near Ormeston

ton House. Force was then employed to drag him from the apartment, and leaving Sir George and Lord Harcourt to console him, with the aid of the ladies, Lord Ormeston, the Viscount, and myself accompanied to her last abode one of the most lovely of her sex.

At the end of the beautiful gloomy walk leading to the mausoleum, Lord Ormeston has planned a monument to the memory of the lovely FRATERNAL VICTIM. The pedestal is to be of white marble upon a black ground, upon which will stand a figure of Virtue weeping over a bust of Juliana, which she is crowning with myrtle. The Graces beneath in mourning attitudes, forming a wreath, on some part of which will be written, to VIRTUE'S FAVOURITE CHILD. The following inscription on the base.

To the Memory  
Of the Amiable and Lovely  
LADY JULIANA MALCOMB,  
Countess of ORMESTON, and  
Viscountess LUMLEY,

This Monument is raised as a Tribute  
of Affection.

TRAVELLER,  
Whoever thou mayest be,  
STOP.

But if thou art endowed with Sensibility,  
thou wilt not refuse a Tear  
To the remembrance of Suffering  
VIRTUE.

Her Remains lie interred in the Family  
MAUSOLEUM,  
And Death snatched greedily his Victim,  
In the XXIVth Year of her Age.  
She has left behind Examples of Virtue,  
Patience, and Fortitude, worthy of  
Imitation, but which never  
Can be EXCELLED.

Having

Having thus, my dear Delia, performed the last sad offices to the amiable Lady Ormeston, we mean to return immediately to our friends, who wait for us at Sittingbourn, Dover being too noisy for Lord Malcomb.

The Viscount has behaved throughout this melancholy transaction in a manner that does the highest credit to his head and heart. He has paid the tribute of unfeigned affection to the manes of this deserving sister, but at the same time is in the highest degree mindful of his father, and the unhappy Campbell. He means to persuade them to go to London. I shall, said he, this morning devote all my time to them, and think my endeavours well rewarded if after some time I can restore them to some degree of composure. My poor father, said he, will suffer the most acutely, not only from his years and infirmities, but from the recollection of his harsh usage to my poor sister. Time alone can blunt the edge of his sorrows. Tell your sister, my dear Osborn, continued he, taking my hand, that shall I not apologize to her for breaking my promise of returning to the Vale, the late unfortunate events have, I doubt not, done it for me. I



go now to render myself worthy of her, and know the best way to merit the smiles of so good a daughter will be, to perform as I ought, the duties of a son.

The carriage is now waiting. Adieu, my dear sister, my respectful duty to our excellent mother.

H. OSBORN.

L E T.

## LETTER CXIV.

LADY HARCOURT TO MISS OSBORN.

ONCE more Anna Harcourt forms her sanguine hopes, that sorrows have bid us a long and last adieu. We arrived, my charming friend, in London this day month, but I forswore the pen till my spirits were a little disencumbered from their unusual load; indeed the fatigues both of body and mind we had all undergone, rendered a little rest absolutely necessary, we have therefore seen none but the afflicted mourners. Lord Malcomb still refuses all consolation, but reason, and the cares and attentions of his friend Sir George have had a proper effect upon Campbell, that is, he comes amongst us, and wears the outward garb of composure, but it is plain to be seen his feelings correspond with his dress; his is not the specious form of mourning, but the reality, undissembled, undisguised. Ah, Juliana! how fleeting are human hopes and expectations! How impatiently did we all look forward

ward to that period when we hoped she would taste the cup of happiness; but in this world it was not to be. Sweet sufferer, she had an inward presage, and the idea of death had been long familiar to her. I forbear to disturb the ashes of the dead, or I could join to execrate most heartily the memory of those by whose wicked arts she has been sent thus to an untimely grave. Her father is to be pitied, poor man, he possesses very weak intellects, and has been made the passive instrument of all this wreck, he now suffers more than dying every day, he is a prey to the severest tortures of remorse.

I had just received a letter from Mr. Morley, he means to accompany Lady Mary Morgan to England in the spring; her Ladyship was so affected by the death of her beloved niece, that her disorder returned with redoubled violence, and she was obliged to go back instantly to Montpelier. The amiable Sophia attended her mother, and we look forward to the time which will bring them to us with pleasing expectation. Miss Marsden's house being still lett, she is at present my guest; Mr. Osborn is Lord Ormeston's, he presses her to complete his happiness, but she

she positively refuses as yet, she alledges that the remembrance of the past distressing scenes is not yet sufficiently obliterated, and begs he will allow her to devote more time to the memory of her beloved Juliana, nor expect her ere the ashes of her friend are scarce yet cold, to join in scenes of mirth and festivity. Mr. Osborn, who *pretends* to have no will but hers, seems to acquiesce, I say pretends, because he does not scruple at every opportunity to murmur and complain, but he might as well be quiet, the hard-hearted Charlotte is inexorable, and he must purchase her smiles, by submission. Suppose, my dear D. your mother and yourself were to come unexpectedly to Grosvenor-square, I do not think our dear Charlotte could resist so many united solicitations. I would wish her to pay every tribute of affection and respect to the memory of Lady Ormeston, but I think it very possible that from excess of delicacy she will endeavour to protract her compliance with your brother's request longer than is necessary. I heard a word dropped slightly the other day of the spring; I grew outrageous, and no more was said.

I hate

I hate affectation and unnecessary scruples, though I would not upon any account have any of my sex deviate from that delicacy which constitutes their principal charm, yet there is a medium; false delicacy not only gives pain to themselves, but others. Charlotte is a woman of strong feelings, sensibility, and good sense, yet she is a little tinctured with that same false delicacy; we must persuade her out of it, and very little reflection will enable her to think properly upon a subject which so nearly concerns her own happiness, and that of your brother's; though a little wrong once, his patience ought not to be tried too much, for the lords of the creation are odd mortals sometimes. My odd mortal Lord Harcourt, joins me in requesting that you will become our guest with all speed, in order to hasten the event we all so much desire.

Remember, Delia, you will see Lord Viscount Malcomb; blush not, my good girl, at my mentioning him so abruptly, his filial piety has exalted his character so highly, that Miss Osborn's virtues can alone reward him. I am happy to add further, that Augustus's late acquisitions of title and fortune



fortune have had no effect upon his mind or manners, he is just the same, mild, humble, and unassuming; his heart and his purse are open to the wretched, and his greatest pleasure seems doing good. Sir George Edgecomb is charmed with him, and blesses the fortunate moment in which he became his son. Charlotte desires me to add her love; and I am

A. HARCOURT.

L E T-

## L E T T E R CXV.

LADY HARCOURT TO MISS H. LEYBURN.

HARRIET,

**Y**OU told me on leaving town, you should impatiently expect a summons from under my hand to be bride-maid, so now pack up your bridal finery, and whirl to Grosvenor-square, or my poor brains will be turned in hunting out fashions. Charlotte is too seriously sentimental to trouble her head about such trifles, and I verily believe would go to church in her night-cap were I to suffer it. She leads poor Osborn a sad life, even now she has consented, if the man says any thing lively or smiles, she fetches a long heigh-ho! and looks wofully dismal, yet she is all condescending sweetness the men say. I wanted to try how such graces would become me last night. Lord Harcourt was going to give me one of his twirls, I looked grave, sighed and sat down. In an instant

instant you would have thought the house had been in a blaze, the bells were furiously rung, half a dozen people called in a breath, my Anna! my angel! what is the matter? let me send for Warren! Wilton! some drops for your lady. And thus the good creature ran on till I was in reality ready to drop—but with laughter. He chid me gently for alarming him, and I resolved in future not to ape the manners of others.

Lady Ormeston is the most lively creature imaginable. Lord Malcomb grows very fond of her; the name brings back melancholy remembrances, but I hope this wedding will help to obliterate them. I want you, Harriet, to help me to rally that little prude Delia Osborn: her eyes tell tales whenever the Viscount is present, yet she does not love him, no; love is a passion she is totally unacquainted with, a childish intimacy, that is all improved by age into friendship; and I suppose by and bye they will marry out of pure friendship; well prudence is a very fine thing. We have I fear no conquest amongst our circle worthy your attempting except one—start not, Harriet—

282 JULIANA ORMESTON : OR,  
riet—the man's well enough; what  
think you of Sir George Edgecomb?  
But pleasantly apart, hasten to us the  
moment you can.

A. HARCOURT.

LET-

## LETTER CXVI.

LADY HARCOURT TO LADY M. MORGAN.

MANY thanks are due to your Ladyship, for the honour of your correspondence, ever since our unfortunate parting at Calais; we shall have no longer occasion to continue this distant intimacy, as a short time will now bring you to England, whither the good wishes of many, very many attend you. We have lately had many guests; Mrs. and Miss Osborn are still among the number, and I have the satisfaction to inform your ladyship that Thursday next is fixed for the union of Mr. Osborn and Miss Marsden, a lady you have so often and so justly admired, she was the earliest friend of my youth, and our pleasures and pains were ever mutual; you may then imagine, my dear madam, with what heartfelt pleasure I behold her approaching happiness; I have long looked forward to it as a most pleasing event, and Mr. Osborn has had in me a very  
warm



warm advocate. Lord Malcomb is nearly as miserable as ever, he has with some intreaty consented to be present next Thursday; we hope by amusing to dispel his disagreeable reflections. The amiable Frederic and generous Campbell divide their whole time with him, and give striking examples of the attention age and sorrow should always claim, but so seldom share. I must mention to you, my dear Lady Mary, an instance of divine vengeance. Meredith, the vile accomplice of all the mischiefs we have had so much reason to deplore, is imprisoned at Edinburgh, for swindling a gentleman out of a sum of money. Lord Malcomb is determined to bring him to justice, as the murderer of his unhappy son, and the surgeon who saw him fire the pistol, is gone down thither to swear against him. I think the ridding the world of him will be a general benefit to human nature. I have also another piece of news, less tragical indeed, but which I am sorry to say, a little concerns your ladyship as part of the family, but when I reflect that your ideas are not kindred to theirs, I dread the less to shock you by it, as  
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it is a very natural consequence of a mistaken education, joined to a mind contracted, by the errors of early instruction. In short, Lady Sophonisba the other day ran away with a hair-dresser; her mother is inconsolable. Lord Ormeston, ever ready to alleviate distress, at her request pursued the fugitives, but did not find them time enough to prevent their being married, a circumstance he thought rather desirable, after the imprudences he found out she had been guilty of. The young lady it seems maintained all her usual dignity, and treated the interference of her cousin with the most haughty contempt, but her husband more wisely implored his good offices with the irritated mother. I hope, my dear madam, no relapse will prevent our seeing you with Mr. Morley; nor must the charming Sophia be exempted from the share she deserves in our general impatience to see you all in England; her conduct proves and will repay the cares of her excellent monitors. Thursday being so near, I have been obliged to put all my events in very little compass, as Charlotte will do nothing without my approbation.

Thus

Thus you will naturally conclude me a person of vast consequence, and fully employed. Permit me to present Lord Harcourt's good wishes jointly with my own for your happiness, and safe arrival, and I am respectfully

Your Ladyship's servant,

A. HARCOURT.

F I N I S.

